

TRAVEL HISTORY CULTURE PEOPLE FOOD

ABRUZZISSIMO MAGAZINE



How Ridley Scott fell in
love with Abruzzo

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Villa Badessa, a hamlet
with Greek chants

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*Special Supplement
Inside:*

**121 SUMMER
SAGRE AND
FESTIVALS
IN ABRUZZO**

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ON THE COVER:

Villa Badessa. Photo by Anna Lebedeva. Read the story on page 13.

LEFT:

Villa Badessa. Photo by Anna Lebedeva. Read the story on page 13.

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Editor's Note

When the *sagre*, festivals, and concerts fill every weekend of the calendar, you know that summer has arrived in Abruzzo. Every year I keep trying to squeeze a few of them into one weekend but there are still so many to attend! As always, in June, we publish a mega-supplement with *sagre* and festivals to help you plan well ahead. This year we've gathered 121 of them in one supplement! with a handy calendar! The biggest ever! Find it at the end of the issue (free for our premium subscribers; it can be purchased separately [here](#) or with a [premium subscription](#)).

This month we visit Villa Badessa, the only Arbëreshë community in Abruzzo, which was founded in the 18th century. Its magnificent collection of Greek-Byzantine icons is one of the biggest in Italy.

In August, a new movie by Ridley Scott will be released and Abruzzo will be centre stage in it, as many of its most dramatic scenes were filmed in the region. I spoke to Piercesare Stagni, the president of the Abruzzo Film Commission, about the filming and other cinematic locations in Abruzzo.

David Ferrante tells us the story of the *Passatella*, a drinking game that was played for centuries in Abruzzo and even made a Pope and a King lose their tempers. Put aside some extra time for this article, because the rules were complex and the division of players into masters and victims can seem confusing to the uninitiated.

This month, after 400 years, L'Aquila welcomes back a masterpiece by Raffaello. Read about its history and make sure to visit the exhibition at the Museo Nazionale d'Abruzzo.

ABRUZZISSIMO is taking a slightly longer break this summer, as I am working on an exciting publishing project that I can't wait to share with you soon; so the next issue will be in your inbox on September 5, but I will be sending you news and updates throughout the summer.

In the meantime, if you want to share a story, suggest an idea for one, or ask a question, write to me at editor@abruzzissimo.com. And if you know someone who would love the magazine too, please spread the word!

Anna Lebedeva
Founder & Editor

DIGEST OF RECENT REGIONAL NEWS AND UPCOMING EVENTS FROM ABRUZZO NEWSPAPERS



THE BELLS OF L'AQUILA RING OUT AGAIN

For 17 years, the bells of **L'Aquila's Duomo** were silent – brought down by the earthquake of 6 April 2009 and left, for a time, lying on the *piazza* outside. This month, their sound has returned to the historic centre. The Cathedral of Santi Massimo e Giorgio dates to the second half of the 13th century, built alongside the founding of the city. Among the seven historic bells now remounted on new seismic-proof structures is the great bell cast in 1601 by local masters – its sound once marked market days and religious feasts. For many *aquilani*, hearing the bells again is less a technical achievement than something far more personal – a familiar voice, long missed, finally home.

ITALY'S YOUNGEST MAYOR ELECTED IN ABRUZZO

At just 22 years old, Sergio Panzone has become Italy's youngest mayor after winning the local election in San Benedetto in Perillis (PE), one of the region's smallest municipalities, a quiet village of roughly 100 residents. Panzone, who works at the village's only café, *Caffè di Centro*, secured 58.33% of the vote. His election is seen as a sign of generational renewal in a mountain community long affected by depopulation and shrinking services. He envisions a village that supports families, attracts young people back, and restores community life without losing its identity.



YOUR GUIDE TO ABRUZZO'S SUMMER FESTIVALS 2026

Our annual summer mega-supplement is back – and this year's edition is bigger than ever, with 121 festivals and *sagre*, from pasta feasts to open-air concerts and street art events, plus travel tips to help you make the most of the season. Free for premium subscribers – find it at the end of this issue. Not yet a premium subscriber? [Upgrade](#) your subscription or [purchase the supplement](#) separately.

ENERGY BILLS ARE AFFORDABLE BUT STILL HIGH

Households in Abruzzo on variable-rate energy contracts paid an average of €1,896 in utility bills in 2025, only slightly less than 2024 but significantly higher than 2018, when annual costs were under €1,200, according to an analysis by Facile.it based on over 21,000 users. Gas accounted for the bulk at €1,231, while electricity averaged €665 – placing Abruzzo third among Italian regions for lowest power bills. **Pescara** had the highest electricity costs provincially, while **Chieti** led on gas. With the war in Iran now threatening to push energy prices higher, the region's small advantage may not last long.

PRE-ROMAN NECROPOLIS NEAR VASTO REVEALED

A remarkable archaeological discovery near **Vasto** can now be revealed after being kept secret for months to protect it from looters. Experts from the Chieti-Pescara Superintendency conducted a painstaking excavation in complete secrecy at the **Punta Penna** industrial area, uncovering a pre-Roman necropolis of at least 100 burials (see photos [here](#)) dating to the 4th and 5th centuries BCE, belonging to the ancient Frentani people. Around 40 burial mounds have yielded human remains alongside grave goods including pottery, jewellery, weapons, and bronze fittings. All finds have now been safely transferred to the Superintendency's laboratories in Chieti for restoration and study. Experts describe it as one of the most important archaeological discoveries in the region in recent years.



NEW AIRPORT BUS SERVICE FOR ABRUZZO

Travelling to and from **Abruzzo Airport** without a car has long been a headache – that is about to change. Launching this month, **TUA4Fly** is a new bus service synchronised with actual flight arrivals and departures (unlike the previous service, Pescara Airlink), running direct – no intermediate stops – between the airport and **Pescara** city centre, connecting to the railway station, urban and regional bus terminals, and the Pescara-Montesilvano trolleybus line. Buses depart the airport around 30 minutes after landing; return services are timed to get passengers there at least an hour before departure. The ticket costs €3, is valid for 90 minutes, and can be used on other urban lines too. It can be purchased on board by contactless payment, via the [TUA GO app](#), or through Trenitalia alongside a rail ticket.

DID YOU KNOW?



THE STRINGS OF SALLE

For over four centuries, the small town of **Salle (PE)** supplied strings to the musical world – gut strings, hand-twisted from sheep and bovine intestines, made in family workshops by craftsmen known as *cordai*. No one knows exactly when this tradition began, but for generations Salle's families thrived on it. Sheep were everywhere on the surrounding hills, and their intestines became the raw material for a craft that would travel the world. The work was entirely family-based: every member of the household had a role, specializing in one of the many stages of production – scraping, splitting, twisting, refining, and polishing.

As pastoral life declined and raw materials grew scarce, many string-makers emigrated, opening workshops in Naples, Genoa, Rome, Florence, and even France. During the mid-20th century, the industry diversified into tennis racket strings and surgical sutures. By the 1950s and 60s, rising demand from the music world brought producers back to their roots, now combining gut with steel and nylon.

The largest musical instrument string manufacturer in the world, J. D'Addario & Company, started with two brothers, Charles and Rocco D'Addario, who emigrated from Salle in the early 20th century. Three generations later, the family business is headquartered in Farmingdale, New York and employs more people than the entire population of Salle where it started.

Today, only the Toro family still makes gut strings by hand, specializing in Baroque and early music instruments – a craft that has found a new, global audience. Beniamino Toro also runs the *Museo delle Corde Armoniche* (in the photo), the only museum in the world dedicated to this craft (open on request; tel. 0039 338 482 8801). In summer, Salle hosts Baroque music concerts. For more details, visit the municipality's [page](#).

RAPHAEL'S VISITATION RETURNS TO L'AQUILA

For almost four centuries, one of Raphael's most celebrated late works has hung in Spain, in the Prado museum thousands of kilometres from L'Aquila, for which it was made. Now, in a moment of extraordinary cultural significance, The Visitation returns to L'Aquila, on display at the MuNDA (Museo Nazionale d'Abruzzo) from 27 June 2026 as part of the exhibition La Visitazione all'Aquila. Raffaello e Pontormo.

"This is an exceptional loan – one of the highlights of the entire programme marking L'Aquila's year as Capital of Culture," says art historian and regular contributor to ABRUZZISSIMO, Maria Giovanna Palermo.

The Visitation depicts the meeting between the Virgin Mary and her cousin Elizabeth, both pregnant, as described in the Gospel of Luke. The painting's origins are deeply rooted in the life of the city – and in a personal friendship. Giovanbattista Branconio dell'Aquila was a papal protonotary and close friend of Raphael, and it was at his father Marino's request that the commission was placed around 1517. Marino's wife was herself called Elisabeth – lending the choice of subject an intimate, private meaning beyond the purely devotional. The question of who actually held the brush, however, is more complicated than tradition suggests. Raphael provided the design – and was paid 300 escudos for it – but the painting itself is believed to have been executed by workshop assistants Giulio Romano and Giovanni Francesco Penni, a collaborative practice typical of his busy final years. The work remained in the Branconio chapel for over a century, until it was plundered by the occupation troops of Philip IV of Spain in 1655, eventually making its way to the Prado. The church of San Silvestro, which suffered severe damage in the 2009 earthquake and reopened after a €6.7 million restoration in 2019, today displays a copy in its place.



The Visitation by Raphael

The exhibition pairs the Prado work with Pontormo's Visitation, on loan from the small church of San Michele in Carmignano, near Florence. Painted at the end of the 1520s, it is one of the masterpieces of Florentine Mannerism – the same scene rendered with shimmering colours, elongated forms, and psychological intensity, a world away from Raphael's serene High Renaissance grace. Together, the two paintings chart, in a single room, the shift from Renaissance classicism to the anxious energy that followed.

Maria Giovanna Palermo describes what makes the Raphael so enduringly powerful: the way meaning flows through gaze and touch – "Elizabeth's gaze capable of revealing a silent bond, and the meeting of their hands, a clasp that shines as a symbol of the encounter between the Divine that Mary carries and the humanity of Elizabeth." For the people of L'Aquila – a city that has endured so much – the chance to stand before that image in its home city, after nearly 400 years, is a rare and deeply felt gift.

For more information about the exhibition, visit the [MuNDA website](#).



LA PASSATELLA: THE GAME THAT WORRIED GOVERNMENTS

By David Ferrante

For centuries, in Abruzzo, a deceptively simple drinking game divided players into masters and victims, attracted the attention of governments, and inspired a 68-rule rulebook. Meet the *Passatella* and its most unlucky figure, the Elm.

I find myself thinking of my grandfather, who on Sundays would go "to the tavern for the *Passatella*" – a way to pass the long afternoons in small villages. The *Passatella* is much more than a card game; it is a fascinating, and at times violent, social ritual. In Abruzzo, as in much of central and southern Italy, it is the expression of a popular culture where the conviviality of wine collides with the intoxication of power and the risk of a brawl. And my grandfather would take his Ape Piaggio to go and compete for "a quarter-litre and a soda" amid the sharp smell of wine and beer, between smiles and foul words. It was tough to hold out as the Elm, but equally tough to hold your liquor – which is why my grandfather always kept some salted cod in his pocket – the logic being simple: salt makes you thirsty, and thirst keeps you in the game.

Photo: Il gioco della passatella, 1831, by Bartolomeo Pinelli

A GAME THAT MADE GOVERNMENTS NERVOUS

The *Passatella* has its roots in ancient convivial rituals, such as the Greek symposium where the *symposiarch* (the leader) dictated the rules. In Rome, it was known as *Rex Vini*. Its essence, however, has remained unchanged: the temporary power of one individual over the other guests. The aggression the game unleashed was serious enough to attract government attention for centuries. In the Kingdom of Naples, the minister Bernardo Tanucci tried to ban it outright in the 18th century, seeing it as a breeding ground for idleness and disorder. The unified Italian state took a similar line, keeping the *Passatella* under watch in its public safety legislation. The game had a way of making authorities nervous.

Popular history has dressed the game in remarkable anecdotes that highlight its symbolic power. Even Pope Sixtus V, according to legend, was reduced to fury when his cardinals conspired to make him repeatedly the Elm during a game he had organised to understand its violent reputation. In another account, Ferdinand II of Bourbon, known as King Bomba, fell into a similar trap during a courtly version of the game, where ministers ensured he too ended up empty-handed, reduced from sovereign to excluded player. Only then did the King supposedly understand the psychological trigger built into the game, becoming more lenient toward the violence it caused and recognising it as a "crime of passion" provoked by the outrage of being made the Elm.

THE RULES OF THE GAME

At the table stood a small hierarchy. The *Padrone* held authority over the bottle, supported by the *Sotto*, an ally and advisor who helped shape decisions. Alongside them were the *Pari* (the Equals), all engaged in constant negotiation as advantage shifted from one side to another.

Each round unfolded through a sequence of proposals around the table: the *Padrone* suggested who should drink, the *Sotto* supported or challenged the decision, and the group responded before a glass



Men playing cards in a bar in Cocullo. Photo by Anna Lebedeva

of wine was assigned. Round after round, these exchanges altered the balance of the table. The aim was that, by the end, all players would have drunk except one: the *Olmo*.

The *Olmo* is not formally chosen in a single decision, but emerges over successive rounds as shifting agreements gradually leave one player without assigned drinks, becoming the focus of collective teasing and playful punishments.

Everything unfolded through bargaining. The *Padrone* steered advantage toward selected allies, while the *Sotto* reinforced or countered those choices by reshaping agreements and testing loyalties. The rest of the table formed fragile, temporary alliances, adjusting constantly to avoid exclusion in later rounds.

THE ELM

The word *olmo* – elm – carries several possible origins, and all may hold some truth, as folk language rarely has a single clean source. In peasant tradition, the elm was the tree used to support grapevines, strong but unproductive, sustaining life without bearing fruit. Another origin points to the medieval town square, where agreements were struck beneath the elm at its centre; those who failed were left exposed and empty-handed.

More simply, "holding the elm" came to describe a condition of endurance without reward. The tree stands firm while everything else moves around it, offering support yet receiving nothing in return.

In the *Passatella*, this image becomes a social role. The Elm is the player who gives structure to the game's tension by absorbing its outcome. Chosen as the one who does not drink, he becomes the focus of the table's humour and humiliation, a temporary outlet for the group's shifting hierarchies.

THE SCAPEGOAT

The dynamic is as old as human groups: the outsider defines the insiders. By making one man the Elm, the rest become a community – united, for the duration of a bottle, by the shared pleasure of not being him. More often than not, the evening would end in argument or brawl. It is from this tension that the expression "to hold the Elm" means to endure humiliation without breaking, absorbing the pressure until it passes.

Today, the *Passatella* has not so much disappeared as faded – retreating into memory and occasional

Men in a cantina in Roccamorice, 1950-1960s. Photo courtesy of [Roccheggiando Roccamorice per immagini](#)

folkloric re-enactments. In my part of Abruzzo, a small group kept it alive until about ten years ago. Then time stepped in, claimed the role of *Padrone*, and made the old tavern hierarchies its final Elm.

David Ferrante is a writer, sociologist, and a passionate researcher of Abruzzo's culture and traditions.

NOTES FOR THE READER

Nu quarte e na gazzose – "a quarter-litre of wine and a soda" – was the typical stake of the game. The fact that people came to blows over something so small is precisely the point: the *Passatella* was never really about the wine.

Bernardo Tanucci (1698–1783) served as chief minister of the Kingdom of Naples under two Bourbon kings. In 1756 he had the kingdom's highest court issue an edict threatening severe penalties for playing the *Passatella* – a sign of how seriously it was taken at the highest levels.

Ferdinand II of Bourbon earned this nickname **Re Bomba** – King Bomb – for ordering the naval bombardment of Messina and other Sicilian cities during the popular uprisings of 1848. It became a byword across Europe for royal brutality.





HOW RIDLEY SCOTT FELL IN LOVE WITH ABRUZZO

Piercesare Stagni in conversation with Anna Lebedeva

The president of Abruzzo Film Commission, Piercesare Stagni, tells how one of Hollywood's greatest directors secretly chose Abruzzo's mountains as the backdrop for his new post-apocalyptic epic.

Ridley Scott's new film, *The Dog Stars*, is due for release in August, and it is unlike anything the director has made before. Based on Peter Heller's celebrated novel, it is a post-pandemic survival story in which the protagonist – a man who has survived a mass-casualty plague – lives in a small plane and soars over the mountains of Wyoming searching for other survivors. It is an action film, with the mountains that are almost a character in themselves.

SECRET MEETINGS

When Ridley Scott decided he needed mountains that could pass for the wilds of Wyoming, he came to Italy himself, quietly, with his wife, and spent weeks driving across the country without telling anyone who he was or

**Photo: Film set preparation in Avezzano in May 2025.
Photo by Marica Massaro**

what he was looking for. A full year before a single frame was shot, those private scouting trips had given him a clear enough picture that his production team could reach out to a local executive production company, who then contacted us at the Abruzzo Film Commission.

We then organised a series of meetings – at first confidential, without Scott present – with the park directors and the regional tourism authority. Gradually, as trust was established and logistical questions were answered, Scott himself joined the discussions. The challenge was significant: many of the locations he wanted were inside protected natural parks, where environmental restrictions are stringent and where every permit opens a formal procedure to verify that no harm is done to vegetation, wildlife, or the broader ecosystem. In certain seasons, specific zones are off-limits due to wildflower blooms or the nesting and laying cycles of the local viper population. We had to find places that matched Scott's vision while remaining within the rules that protect these extraordinary environments.

ON LOCATIONS

Three locations in Abruzzo were ultimately selected. The main shoot took place on Val d'Arano and Monte Magnola near Ovindoli, in the

Parco Regionale Sirente-Velino, high mountain terrain that, on screen, reads convincingly as the American West. The production then moved to the industrial nucleus of Avezzano for additional scenes, before concluding with two or three days at the Abruzzo Parks Airport near Preturo.

The scale of the operation was extraordinary. Some 600 to 700 people were involved in the Abruzzo shoot alone. In Ovindoli, the production company essentially constructed a temporary village – hundreds of trucks, equipment, trailers, and support infrastructure filling the valley. I was fortunate to be among the very few outsiders allowed on set for a visit, alongside local officials. I signed an agreement not to speak about the details until the film's release, so I have to respect that. What I can say is that the care and professionalism on display were remarkable.

The cast present during the Abruzzo shoot included Jacob Elordi – currently one of the most in-demand young actors in Hollywood, fresh from his acclaimed portrayal of Frankenstein – and Margaret Qualley. Security around the production was exceptionally tight; there were no autograph moments, no crowd gatherings.

Piercesare Stagni at the set of *The Dog Stars* in Abruzzo



WHAT THIS MEANS FOR ABRUZZO

I believe *The Dog Stars* could be a turning point for how the world sees this region. Abruzzo is cinematically underexposed internationally – which, paradoxically, makes it all the more compelling for filmmakers looking for landscapes that feel undiscovered. It has everything: mountains, coastline, medieval villages, industrial zones that can double for almost any environment. It is the greenest region in Europe, with four national parks covering an extraordinary proportion of its territory.

We are currently launching a €4 million regional funding programme for film, television, documentary, and short film production – one of the most substantial incentives of its kind in central Italy. At the Berlin film market earlier this year I met numerous international producers already interested in shooting here. The fund requires productions to engage local crew and, ideally, to tell stories rooted in Abruzzo's own landscapes and history. Two regional film schools are training the next generation of filmmakers: IFA in Pescara and the Centre for Experimental

A scene from *The Dog Stars*

Cinematography in L'Aquila, a city with a rich cinematic history that includes the Accademia dell'Immagine, where the great cinematographer Vittorio Storaro once taught – and where I myself studied.

As for cine-tourism, if *The Dog Stars* performs as well as I hope, we may see American and international visitors coming specifically to stand where Scott's cameras stood. It has happened before in Abruzzo: Rocca Calascio, the formidable 15th-century fortress in the province of L'Aquila, still draws visitors because of *Ladyhawke*, which filmed there 40 years ago. Campo Imperatore on the Gran Sasso draws fans of *Trinity*, the Bud Spencer and Terence Hill western shot there 50 years ago. I teach cine-tourism at university and in professional schools for tourist guides – it is a genuine economy driver, and one we are only beginning to develop fully.

Piercesare Stagni is President of the Abruzzo Film Commission and a film historian. He is the author of three books on cinema in Abruzzo and is currently completing a new guide to the region's finest film locations.



ABRUZZO ON SCREEN – FILM LOCATIONS

VAL D'ARANO AND MONTE MAGNOLA, OVINDOLI (AQ)

The high mountain plateau where Ridley Scott's crew built their production base for *The Dog Stars*. Sitting within the Parco Regionale Sirente-Velino at around 1,350 metres, Val d'Arano is reachable on foot directly from the centre of Ovindoli via Via Arano – a flat, family-friendly loop of around 5–6 km through beech woods and open pasture, walkable year-round or on horseback and mountain bike. Monte Magnola, which dominates the valley, is the area's main ski mountain in winter with several, more challenging trails.

ROCCA CALASCIO (AQ)

One of Italy's most dramatic fortresses is perched at 1,460 metres. Immortalised in Richard Donner's *Ladyhawke* (1985) and later used in *The Name of the Rose*. A cine-tourism destination in its own right.

ROCCASCALEGNA (CH) AND ROCCAMORICE (PE)

The Name of the Rose (TV series, 2019), the eight-part RAI/Tele München adaptation of Umberto Eco's novel, starring John Turturro, used three Abruzzo locations for some scenes: the castle of Roccascalegna (CH), the Eremo di Santo Spirito in Roccamorice (PE) in the Majella mountains, and the Gole di Fara San Martino (CH).

The New Pope (TV series, 2020), Paolo Sorrentino's sequel to *The Young Pope*, starring John Malkovich and Jude Law, was also filmed at the Eremo di Santo Spirito in Roccamorice (PE) and the mountains around it.

CAMPO IMPERATORE, GRAN SASSO (AQ)

The high plateau of the Gran Sasso massif has doubled for the American West in several productions. Best known internationally as the location for scenes from *They Call Me Trinity* (1970), starring Bud Spencer and Terence Hill. The spot in Campo Imperatore where the film's famous opening bean scene was shot is now marked with a permanent information panel (it is pinned on [Google Maps](#)).

In 2022, Campo Imperatore became the set for Michael Mann's *Ferrari* (2023), starring Adam Driver, Penélope



Photos: (from top) Eremo di Santo Spirito, Rocca Calascio

Cruz and Patrick Dempsey. Scenes recreating the 1957 Mille Miglia were filmed along the panoramic road crossing the western side of the plateau, climbing from Fonte Cerreto below the Gran Sasso cable car station towards Campo Imperatore itself. With its sweeping bends, vast open plains and stark mountain backdrop, the landscape evoked the dangerous and exhilarating roads of post-war Italy's most legendary endurance race.

To explore Abruzzo's film locations in depth, Marianna Colantoni at [Taste Abruzzo Experience](#) can put together a custom itinerary tailored to your interests.



VILLA BADESSA, A HAMLET WITH GREEK CHANTS

Text and photos by Anna
Lebedeva

Villa Badessa, a hamlet of barely 400 souls within the municipality of Rosciano, in the province of Pescara, at first looks like any other quiet Abruzzese hamlet. But step inside the church of Santa Maria Assunta during a celebratory mass and you will hear something unexpected: a rite with chants in Greek that has continued here since 1743.

Villa Badessa – Badhesa in Arbëresh – is the only Albanian community in Abruzzo, and the northernmost of all the Arbëreshë settlements in Italy. Its story begins not in Italy at all, but in the coastal villages of southern Albania, in a region known as Chimara, which overlaps with the ancient territory of Epirus.

A PLANNED MIGRATION

In 1743, eighteen Albanian families from the southern Albanian province of Himarë decided to leave their homes to escape the steady advance of Ottoman power, which had subjected the Albanian lands for two centuries, and violent local feuds with neighbouring villages that had converted to Islam.

Photo: A street sign in Villa Badessa

They were not refugees fleeing into the unknown. "These families came knowing they would be received, and knowing they would be placed somewhere – it was a migration with a contract, official," explains Giuseppe De Micheli, a descendant of one of the founding families and a member of the Associazione Culturale Villa Badessa.

De Micheli explains that Albanian soldiers from the Balkan-Macedonian territories had long served in the armies of the Kingdom of Naples, a tradition that stretched back to the era of Gjergj Kastrioti Skanderbeg, the Albanian national hero who forged alliances with southern Italian rulers in the 15th century. Relatives of the departing families were already serving under Charles III of Bourbon. They lobbied on behalf of their kin, and the result was a formal agreement: the eighteen families – seventy-three people in total, including twenty-seven men, twenty-eight women and eighteen children – were settled on a tract of land in Abruzzo, then part of the Kingdom of Naples. The settlement became known as Villa Badessa.

A CHURCH AT THE CENTRE OF EVERYTHING

One of the first buildings the community built was the church of Santa Maria Assunta, which stands at the entrance to the historic centre, that became and has remained the spiritual and cultural heart of Villa Badessa.

The streets of Villa Badessa



The settlement contract guaranteed the community the freedom to maintain its own religious rite – Greek-Byzantine Catholic, sometimes called the Italo-Albanian rite. It is not Orthodox, a distinction De Micheli is careful to draw. "We are the only Albanian community of the Catholic rite. We recognise the Pope – that in some way made us part of the Catholic family – but we celebrate in the manner of the Eastern Church, the Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom, very similar to the Orthodox Church." The community belongs not to the local diocese of Pescara-Penne, but to the Eparchia of Lungro, in Calabria, which has jurisdiction over all the Arbëreshë parishes of mainland Italy.

Inside the church, the most immediately striking feature is the iconostasis, the ornate screen of icons that separates the congregation from the sanctuary where the priest – the papas – celebrates the liturgy. Lining the side walls are 77 icons on gilded wooden panels, painted between the 15th and the 17th century. Among them, in the apsidal zone, is the most venerated object in Villa Badessa: the icon of the Theotòkos Odighitria, the



Mother of God "who shows the way," dated to the 15th century and brought directly from the Greek monastery of Pikernion in southern Epirus when the founders left Albania in 1743.

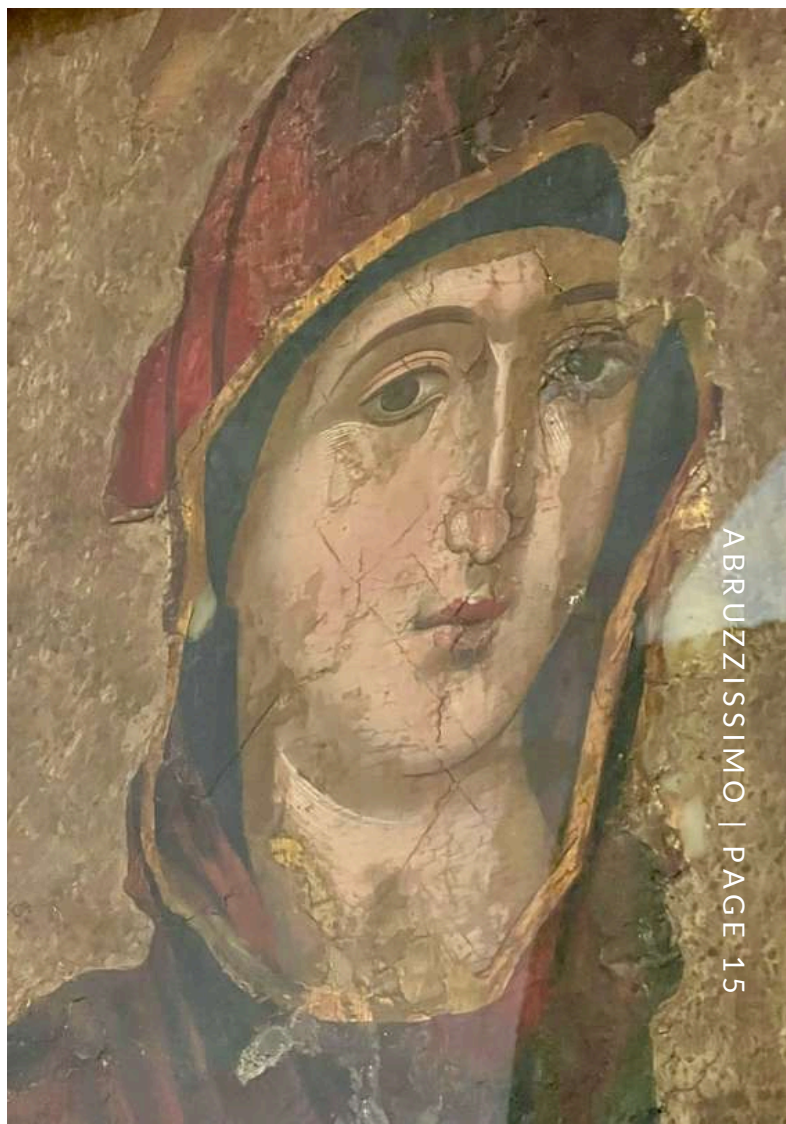
The historic centre of Villa Badessa follows the same layout the Albanian founders laid out in the 18th century: a single main street, with the church of Santa Maria Assunta at its head, and rows of houses arranged perpendicular to it like the teeth of a comb. The original dwellings, several of which survive today, were modest single-storey structures – river stone from the Nora torrent, earth, a coat of white lime, terracotta roof tiles. Until the 1970s and 80s, many had no windows or entrance facing the main street – doors opened onto the back, a distinctly Albanian expression of privacy. As De Micheli puts it: 'the street was public; the home was not.' Today, alongside these modest dwellings stand a handful of larger *palazzi* built by wealthier families in later centuries.

A SCATTERED DIASPORA

Across southern Italy, there are today 52 Arbëreshë communities, stretching from Molise down through Campania, Puglia, Basilicata, Calabria, and Sicily, with a combined population of around 100,000 people. Most date from waves of Albanian migration in the 15th and 16th centuries, following the Ottoman conquest of Albania after Skanderbeg's death in 1468. Villa Badessa, founded in 1743, is the last of these communities to have been established, and the only one in central Italy.

In Molise, four communities have managed to preserve the Arbëresh language into the present day. In Villa Badessa, isolation worked against linguistic survival. "Being the only community in Abruzzo, surrounded by a homogeneous Latin and Western-rite culture, the daily interaction with neighbouring villages eroded the incentive – and eventually the will – to speak Arbëresh," De Micheli explains. By the mid-20th century, the language had effectively disappeared from everyday use, although street signs remain in both Italian and Arbëresh.

Photos: (from top) the church of Santa Maria Assunta; the icon of the Theotòkos Odighitria preserved in the church



WHAT WAS SAVED

The loss of the language is a source of genuine regret. De Micheli reflects, "In an era when the priority was putting food on the table, preserving linguistic and cultural identity was not on families' daily agendas." The same pressures affected traditional dress and cuisine: women in Albanian costume were still a common sight in Villa Badessa in the early 1900s, much as they were in the famously traditional town of Scanno in the province of L'Aquila; by mid-century, the costume too had largely vanished.

Yet through nearly three centuries of demographic pressure, intermarriage with surrounding communities, and cultural homogenisation, the community maintained its distinctive Byzantine rite. The Mass on special feast days is still celebrated in Greek and Italian, with the full Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom. "In more important celebrations, it is predominantly in Greek," De Micheli notes, "but the Our Father, for example, is recited in Italian."

Photos: (below) inside the church; (right) Byzantine icons from the collection



REVIVING THE TRADITIONS

Since 1991, the Associazione Culturale Villa Badessa has worked to recover, document, and promote the community's heritage. The association organises cultural events and has been working to reconstruct traditional Albanian costumes based on historical sources, since the original garments have almost entirely disappeared.

The association has also fostered connections with Albania itself. In 2013, a photographic exhibition depicting 168 residents of Villa Badessa was displayed both locally and in Albania, as part of a twinning programme with the community's region of origin.

Walk through Villa Badessa today and you will hear Abruzzese dialect, not Arbëresh. The language is gone, but something else has held: a sense of where these people come from. "There is a genuine sensitivity to the history of our ancestors, to what makes Villa Badessa what it is," says De Micheli. "In the past, this difference penalised us. Today, it has become something else entirely – a source of pride, for those whose families founded the village, and for those who have come to live here since. The uniqueness that once set us apart is now what holds us together."

Photos: (below) Gara di Ruzzola in Villa Badessa; (right) a monument to Skanderbeg in the town



IF YOU GO

The feast of the Madonna Odighitria, patron of the village, is celebrated on 8 September – the Nativity of the Virgin in the liturgical calendar – and remains the highlight of the religious and civil year.

You can see the Greek-Byzantine icon collection on Sunday mornings, when the church of Santa Maria Assunta opens for the Divine Liturgy.

The Associazione Culturale Villa Badessa organises events throughout the year, including the *Gara di Ruzzola* – a cheese-rolling competition held for 33 consecutive years, in which participants of all ages hurl small rounds of cheese along a road to see who throws furthest. At many events, traditional dishes such as il Tepsì, a meat-and-vegetable pie with roots in the Balkans are served, and some residents dress in Albanian costume – reproductions for the most part, since the original garments are too fragile to wear. These are unashamedly local affairs: noisy, with all generations side by side, and virtually tourist-free.

Follow the association's Facebook [page](#) for updates.





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Anna Lebedeva

Editor of *Abruzzissimo* Magazine

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A CROONER IN GESSOPALENA

By Linda Dini Jenkins

Originally from the small town of West Bromwich in the Birmingham (UK) area, Alan Warren and his wife Jacky now spend their days in the little contrada of Coccioli, just ten minutes outside of Gessopalena. Alan used to be in the solar panel sales and installation business, but now it's all words and music.

"When Jacky and I started looking for a place to retire, we looked all over – in Portugal, Spain, France, and Italy," he says. "We found some of the properties here were very affordable. In fact, we almost bought a place up in Teramo, a little bit north of Pescara. Then we almost bought a place down in Puglia, but those two properties both fell through for different reasons." Then they found their place here, and it was love at first sight.

It needed some work, but once they'd seen the view, they knew this was the one. Their next challenge was to make sure that everything was organized before the Brexit exit, and they succeeded, getting their residency prior to September of 2020.

PLACE WITH A VIEW

They bought a property with a good piece of land that directly overlooks the Roccascalegna castle – the castle in the sky, as it's often called. "It's such a beautiful area, with the beach 45 minutes away, skiing 40 minutes away," he enthuses. "You know, we're right in the middle of all of that activity – Abruzzo is just stunning."

Alan travelled back to the UK a few times for work before he retired. But he started his music writing company in 2025 and has concentrated on music ever since, having been a singer all his life. He says he's "gigged" a few times with different people, but recently, it's mostly been at karaoke-style events.



Alan Warren and his wife Jacky

WORDS TO MUSIC

"Some people say I'm a poet," he muses. "I'm not quite sure if it's poetry, but it's rhyming. I've been doing that for years." Something can suddenly come into his head and he writes a poem about it – like for his kids and his wife, as birthday or Christmas rhymes. And being a singer too, he tried his hand at combining his singing with his songwriting, and lately he's been concentrating on that. He has a studio here, not far from the house, where he's got his speakers and everything he needs for recording, which he taught himself how to do.

With the stunning beauty of Abruzzo as his backdrop, it's no wonder Alan has been so prolific. Since 2025, he's released 14 of his own songs and more than 32 cover songs. He's being distributed through a company called DistroKid, which distributes all over the world to all different kinds of outlets like iTunes and Spotify and YouTube. In the first 12 months of releasing songs, he's reached over 2.2 million streams. Alan has a big fan base in the Philippines, where over 1.2 million streams have come from. So he created a Philippine homepage on his [website](#) just to thank his followers.



Alan and Jacky's house with the recording studio

"That's really good. I'm proud of that fact," he says. "I would have never thought I'd have reached two and a half million people out there listening to my songs. Fantastic, fantastic. Unfortunately, payments for streaming are not what people might think. So with 2.2 million streams, it's only amounted to about USD\$61 in my pocket!"

But the money factor does not deter him. He still gets up and goes over to the studio every day and is planning to release about half a dozen songs by summer, with the help of his wife Jacky, who puts the artwork and videos together, and has even designed t-shirts to support the song releases.

"The e-commerce side of it is something completely foreign" he laughs. "I mean, we're old guys, so it's all new, promoting ourselves in this environment at our age."

THE MAESTRO

Alan calls himself an international crooner, and sings everything from Nat King Cole to Ed Sheeran – even songs by Lady Gaga and Adele. He's also written a song about his new home, *Sunrise in Gessopalena*: it's a verse first in English and then Italian, all about the glow of the Maiella when he takes his two Australian shepherd dogs out walking in the early morning. "It's about the experience of the bells ringing in the morning, the mist, the smoke rising from the chimneys, and you know, everything is a lyrical discovery that I've had, that I've found in this area," he explains.

You can hear Alan singing karaoke locally and also in his live concerts. He has also appeared as a guest singer with *The Fuzzy Dice*, a rock 'n' roll band that performs throughout Abruzzo. Alan speaks highly of them – calling them the best rock 'n' roll group in the area.

Italians in the audience call Alan "The Maestro," which he loves. And he loves that they appreciate some of the old standards like *New York, New York* and *My Way*. Eventually, he says, he'll get more Italian songs out there because he loves Italy. "The people are lovely here," he says, "and, you know you're very much appreciated when they sing along with you."

ON THE ROAD

One of the benefits of being on the road is that Alan and Jacky have made lots of friends locally. Since they've been travelling around for the past two and a bit years, they are known not only in Gessopalena, but also in the nearby towns of Bomba, Borello, Rossello, and beyond. And bookings are coming in for club dates, birthdays, weddings, beach events, and so on. "As any entertainer will tell you, we live for it, we live for the applause, we live for the people coming up to get to know us," he beams. "It's fantastic."

He has a repertoire of about 250 songs but his biggest seller by far, however, has been *The Prayer*, which was released by both Andrea Bocelli and Celine Dion. "The first time I sang it was at the church here in Roccascalegna, when my friend Sean and his wife got married and they asked me to sing it, accompanied by a fellow named Tim playing guitar. Since then I've released it myself and it's got over a million streams, so I'm really proud of that."

BEYOND THE MUSIC, SORT OF

There's an active group of ex-pats in the area, according to Alan – a mixture of Canadians, Australians, Dutch, and Americans – who meet regularly. And they're going to start putting on shows soon at Alan and Jacky's house. Think barbecues with themed evenings and afternoons of love songs, show tunes, country and western ballads . . . all in the shadow of Roccascalegna and the Madre Maiella. On a clear day, they just might be heard all the way back to Birmingham.

Linda Dini Jenkins is a travel planner and author of several books. Her new book, How Way Leads on to Way, is forthcoming from Finishing Line Press.

SPEAKING ABRUZZESE

THE WISDOM OF THE HOUSEHOLD

Ogne ccas' tèn' nu peng' rett'. Every house has a broken tile.

The meaning of this saying has nothing to do with roofing: every family, however respectable it looks from the outside, carries its own hidden flaw. The apostrophes in *ccas'* and *rett'* simply indicate dropped vowels, which is standard in Abruzzese dialect. Pronounce *ccas'* like the English word "cuss" but with a harder opening consonant, and *rett'* like "ret" — stop before you reach the final vowel.

Li scarpe jè com li parind: cchiù è stritt, cchiù fa dol. Shoes are like relatives — the tighter they are, the more they hurt.

The genius of this comparison is its precision: it's not that relatives are bad, just that the closer they press against you, the more unbearable they become. The word *jè* — meaning "are" — is pronounced like the casual English "yeah" without the final breath," with

the *j* carrying a *y* sound rather than the hard English *j* as in "jump." The word *cchiù*, meaning "more," might look alarming on the page, but it is simply a heavily stressed version of the *ch* sound in the English word "queue," held for just a beat longer.

Dope li cunfitte esce li difitte. After the wedding confetti come the faults.

In Abruzzo — as across much of southern Italy — confetti are not the paper scraps scattered at celebrations in the Anglo-Saxon world, but the sugared almonds traditionally given to wedding guests. What this proverb captures is what happens when that festive moment fades — when the last guest has gone home, the embroidered tablecloths folded away, and the house fallen quiet. It is only then, in the ordinariness of daily life, that two people begin to truly see one another, and discover the small disappointments that no amount of sugared almonds could have predicted or sweetened.

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ABRUZZISSIMO MAGAZINE



QUICK STOP

MEET BROWN BEARS IN PALENA



Most people never see a bear in the wild. Palena's Wildlife Area offers something genuinely rare: a close, unhurried encounter with two European brown bears.

The area currently hosts two resident European brown bears – Iris and Margherita – both born and raised in captivity, which means they cannot be released into the wild. Each has her own story, shaped in different ways by human intervention. Their presence gives the visit an unexpectedly moving quality, somewhere between wildlife encounter and wildlife lesson. You might catch them at their most endearing: dozing in a patch of sunlight, hauling themselves up into the trees with surprising ease, or munching on roots and tasty food that they get from the staff.

Set at around 800 metres above sea level in the Colleduta locality, the one-hectare enclosure is a proper habitat: silver fir woodland, shrubs, fruit trees and grazing clearings. The facility can also serve as a rehabilitation site for wild bears in temporary need of care before returning to nature.

The visit lasts one hour and follows an easy gravel path around the perimeter of the enclosure, led by a knowledgeable guide who covers the biology, ecology and conservation challenges of brown bears in Europe and Abruzzo.

Your starting point is the Museo dell'Orso Marsicano in Via S. Antonio, where you meet your guide before following the group by car for around 3km to the enclosure. Tours run in Italian only. Tickets (€10 adults, €5 children, free under 5) must be booked and purchased in advance through the Area Faunistica's [website](#).

EASY TRAILS

THROUGH THE GORGES FROM ANVERSA DEGLI ABRUZZI TO CASTROVALVA



- **Length:** 6 km
- **Time:** about 2 hours
- **Starting Point:** central piazza in Anversa degli Abruzzi

This circular route – known as the Geological Trail – combines a river canyon, suspended wooden walkways, limestone cliffs and a medieval village perched on a sheer rocky spur, all in less than two hours.

Start from the central piazza of Anversa degli Abruzzi, following signs down towards the picnic area of the Riserva Gole del Sagittario, where the river is. From here, pick up Trail 18. The first section is the showstopper: the path runs along the emerald-green Sagittario river, crossing it three times over charming wooden footbridges suspended just above the water. Towering vertical limestone walls close in on both sides, forming narrow canyons where light barely penetrates and lush vegetation spills from every crevice.

After a short stretch on a quiet asphalt road, the trail climbs more steeply through the rocks – the one genuinely demanding section of an otherwise easy walk. Follow the road until a signed dirt path on the right takes you up the final climb into Castrovalva. Take your time exploring the beautiful medieval village before picking up Trail 19 just beyond the village edge.

The return via Trail 19, past the Castrovalva cemetery, is less dramatic but offers lovely panoramic viewpoints before descending back to the picnic area. Both trails are well marked throughout. See the map [here](#).

For more about Anversa degli Abruzzi and Castrovalva read our article in the March 2026 issue.

CACIOFIORE: WHEN THISTLE MET MILK

By Anna Swann

Around 60 CE, the Roman agronomist Columella wrote in *De Re Rustica* that milk “can be curdled with the flower of wild thistle” – writing it as common knowledge, barely worth explaining. Two thousand years later, that same technique is still being used in Abruzzo to make the Caciofiore Aquilano cheese.

Most cheeses rely on rennet – an enzyme extracted from the stomach lining of young ruminants – to coagulate the milk, but the *Caciofiore Aquilano* never did. Instead, shepherds moving their sheep flocks between mountain and plain along the ancient *tratturi* would pick the heads of wild cardoon flowers (*Carlina acaulis*) and dry them in the sun. Steeped in water, the dried flowers made an infusion that set raw ewe's milk into something soft, creamy, and delicately flavoured.

For centuries, this was how cheese was made in these mountains. Then, gradually, industrial rennet arrived, flocks shrank, and the old ways were set aside until, by the mid-20th century, the *Caciofiore Aquilano* had effectively disappeared. Today it is back, listed on Slow Food's [Ark of Taste](#) – the organisation's register of foods at risk of extinction – and a handful of small farms have revived production.

The process hasn't changed much after 2,000 years: the ewe's milk is gently heated, thistle extract is added, after curdling, the curd is broken twice – first roughly, then into fragments the size of a corn kernel – before being extracted by hand and left to drain on an inclined surface for two days, turned at least four times.



The finished cheese wheel is rindless and cylindrical, 13-15cm in diameter and weighing between 500g and 1kg, its surface bearing the woven impression of the traditional rush basket in which it was shaped.

The *Caciofiore Aquilano* cheese is firm yet crumbly, with a full, lingering flavour – grassy and buttery at once, with the wild thistle bite and a long, nutty finish. It has won prizes at the national level and is considered by serious Italian cheese lovers to be among the country's finest, best paired with a glass of Trebbiano d'Abruzzo.

WHERE TO BUY CACIOFIORE AQUILANO

There are a few producers in Lazio, but in Abruzzo, **Azienda Agricola La Mascionara** in the Gran Sasso e Monti della Laga National Park is the point of reference for this rare cheese. The D'Alessio family has been making award-winning *Caciofiore Aquilano* (in the photo) for three generations, selling it directly to the customers at their shop near Campotosto Lake (address: S.R. 577 Km 3,00 Mascioni di Campotosto (AQ) – enter “La Mascionara Azienda Agricola” in your Google Maps). They have tables outside, so you can order a *tagliere* with their magnificent cheeses and cured meats. They also have a shop in Cermone (AQ), on the road to Teramo (Frazione Bivio di Pizzoli, 72, Cermone (AQ)).

PASTA AL LIMONE

By Anna Swann

The first time I tasted this pasta was at *La Chitarra Antica* in Pescara. Claudio, the owner of the delicatessen, brushed aside my protests that it would take too long and cooked it in just a few minutes, bringing a fragrant, steaming bowl to the table. It has been one of my favourite pasta dishes to make in summer ever since.

I normally use fresh *spaghetti alla chitarra* rather than dry pasta, which cooks in just a few minutes, though the dish is equally good with dry pasta.

Be sure to reserve some of the pasta cooking water before draining. When adding the grated Pecorino, do so gradually, stirring continuously to prevent clumping and keep the sauce smooth. Taste before seasoning with salt and pepper, as the cheese may already provide enough saltiness.

This dish is best served immediately, while the sauce is still creamy and the pasta is hot. If the sauce thickens too much, loosen it with a little of the reserved pasta water.

INGREDIENTS

Serves 4

- 350g spaghetti or tagliatelle, dry pasta
- 200g Pecorino cheese, grated
- zest of 1 lemon, plus extra to serve
- 1 garlic clove
- a handful of fresh mint leaves
- 5 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- black pepper and salt to taste



PREPARATION

In a frying pan large enough to hold the cooked pasta, warm 2 tbsp of the olive oil over medium-low heat. Add the garlic clove and move it around in the oil until it just begins to colour, then discard the garlic and remove the pan from the heat.

Cook the pasta in well-salted boiling water until al dente. While the pasta cooks, add the lemon zest and a generous grinding of black pepper to the oil in the pan.

When the pasta is ready, reserve a ladle of the cooking water before draining. Turn the heat back on to medium-low, add a splash of the reserved pasta water to the pan along with half the Pecorino, a few torn mint leaves, and stir continuously until the cheese melts into a smooth, creamy sauce and the lemon zest is evenly distributed throughout.

Add the drained pasta, scatter over a handful of torn mint leaves, and toss to coat it in the sauce.

Serve immediately, topping each portion with the remaining cheese, a few fresh mint leaves, and a little more freshly grated lemon zest.

PALLOTTE CASCE E OVE

By Gino Primavera

Pallotte casce e ove – cheese and egg balls in dialect – have become popular with younger generations and can be found in many restaurants served as an appetiser or main dish. As always in Abruzzo, traditions vary widely, and everyone believes their own *pallotte* are the best. This accounts for the many versions the dish has spawned. Even the name varies and causes some debate: *pallotte cace e ove*, *pallotte cace e ova*, *pallotte cacio e ova*. In Abruzzo, you call them *pallotte casce e ove* – dialect for cheese and eggs (*casce e ove*) – with the "sc" pronounced like the English "sh" in she.

They are not difficult to make, but the details matter: the confidence of the hands shaping each ball, the balance of ingredients, the precision of the frying. These small things are what separates a good *pallotta* from a great one.

For the sauce, use a *passata* made from Abruzzo's own *pera d'Abruzzo* tomatoes, and the dish completes itself – a simple, honest thing that manages, every time, to win everyone over.

INGREDIENTS

Makes 4 portions

- 4 fresh eggs
- 400 g mixed cheese, finely grated (Abruzzese cow's milk cheese with a smaller portion of young pecorino)
- 200g stale bread
- 1 garlic clove, very finely chopped
- 1 small bunch flat-leaf parsley, very finely chopped
- 4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, for frying
- 700 g tomato *passata*
- 1 medium onion, finely sliced
- 1 sweet pepper, cut into thin strips



PREPARATION

Crumble the bread by hand. Beat the eggs and combine thoroughly with the cheese, crumbled bread, garlic, and parsley. Work the mixture until smooth and firm enough to hold its shape but with a little give. Cover and refrigerate for two hours. This rest allows the ingredients to bind and makes the *pallotte* easier to shape.

With lightly dampened hands, shape the mixture into round or oval balls roughly 6-7 cm in size (or slightly bigger). They should be compact and smooth with no cracks.

Heat 4-5 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, for frying in a wide pan over medium-high heat. Fry the *pallotte*, turning carefully, until golden on all sides. Drain on kitchen paper and leave to cool.

In a wide, deep pan gently soften the onion and sweet pepper in a little olive oil over a low heat until tender and fragrant. Add the tomato *passata* and season lightly. Keep the sauce fairly loose as the *pallotte* will absorb a great deal of it during cooking.

Gently lower the fried *pallotte* into the simmering sauce (in Abruzzese we say *calarle*, to lower them, a word that captures the care the action requires).

Simmer over a low heat, turning them very gently from time to time. The *pallotte* will swell considerably as they absorb the sauce. By the end, the sauce should be well reduced and the *pallotte* noticeably larger than when they went in. Serve hot.

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In Calascio a major grant helps to revive public spaces and village life

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FESTIVALS AND SAGRE

IN ABRUZZO

SUMMER 2026

As the summer begins, Abruzzo is getting ready for a season of traditional *sagre* (food festivals), concerts, religious processions, and historical re-enactments. Many of the festivals are small and local and finding information about them in advance might be difficult, so we have put together this supplement to help you plan your summer adventures.

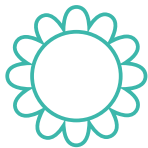
In this round-up, you will find up-to-date information about schedules, locations, ticket sales, and other useful details for 121 summer festivals and events. It is an extensive but not comprehensive list, so we suggest that you keep an eye on our [Facebook page](#) and join our [online community](#) where we post many event announcements.

Since many dates were unavailable at the time of writing, we have provided approximate dates based on the previous year.

The festival names in the index table on pages 3-5 are clickable: select any name to jump straight to that festival's page.

While we did everything to ensure the accuracy of the information, make sure you check the times and programme in the links provided before heading to a festival.

SYMBOLS FOR QUICK REFERENCE:



TRADITIONAL FESTIVAL



FOOD AND DRINK FESTIVAL



MUSIC FESTIVAL



HISTORICAL RE-ENACTMENT



HARD TO CLASSIFY, BUT A LOT OF FUN!



ARTS

Festivals & Sagre in Abruzzo — Summer 2026

Click on a festival name to jump to its listing.

#	Name	Location	Date
— JUNE —			
1	Sagra delle Ciliegie	Raiano (AQ)	June 5–7
2	Infiorata	Roccascalegna (CH)	June 7
3	Infiorata	Casoli (CH)	June 7
4	Sagra delle Ciliegie	Giuliano Teatino (CH)	June 8
5	Sagra del Formaggio Fritto	Toricella Sicura (TE)	June 12–14
6	Giri di Pinta	Spoltore (PE)	June 12–14
7	Borgo di Vino	Città Sant'Angelo (PE)	June 12–14
8	Un Castello di Birra	Sant'Omero (TE)	June 16–21
9	Abruzzo in Bolla	L'Aquila	June 20–22
10	Bucchianico in Festa	Bucchianico (CH)	June 25–28
11	A Love Supreme – Capestrano Incontri Jazz	Capestrano (AQ)	June 26–28
12	Notte Romantica	Scanno (AQ) and other towns	June 27
13	Festa della Pastorizia	Rendinara (AQ)	June 27
14	Classical Music in Alba Fucens (Festiv'Alba)	Massa d'Albe / Rocca di Cambio / Rocca di Mezzo / Rosciolo (AQ)	June 29 – August 22
— JULY —			
15	Concerti delle Abbazie	Various, Province of Teramo	July 1 – August 5
16	Cerasuolo a Mare	Pescara / Silvi Marina / Città Sant'Angelo / Giulianova / Francavilla al Mare	July – August
17	Abruzzo Gran Tour	Avezzano (AQ)	July 1–6
18	Corsa del Cappello	Paganica (AQ)	July 3–5
19	Festa del Peperone	Sant'Onofrio, Campli (TE)	First week of July
20	Sagra di Pizza Fritta	Turrivalignani (PE)	First week of July
21	Cerasum – Tortoreto Cerasuolo Festival	Tortoreto (TE)	July 4–6
22	Pane e Pace	Frattura Vecchia (AQ)	July 6
23	Mare di Brace	Tortoreto (TE)	July 7–12
24	Pinta tra i Dipinti	Casoli di Atri (TE)	July 8–12
25	Sagra dell'Aglio Rosso di Sulmona	Campo di Fano (AQ)	July 10–11
26	Pescara Jazz Festival	Pescara	Second week of July
27	Spontanea Abruzzo Summer	Pescara	July 12
28	Un Borgo di Birra	Civitella del Tronto (TE)	July 13–19
29	Truffle Festival in Campovalano	Campovalano (TE)	Mid-July
30	Ascanio Festival	Tagliacozzo (AQ)	Mid-July
31	BirrArt Craft Beer Festival	Tagliacozzo (AQ)	Mid-July
32	Festa della Trebbiatura & Sagra della Frittella	Collepietro / Mosciano Sant'Angelo (TE)	Mid-July
33	Sagra della Frittella Ornanese	Ornano Grande di Colledara (TE)	July 16–19
34	Sagra della Cococciata	Paterno di Avezzano (AQ)	July 18
35	Calici di Stelle	Ortona and wineries across Abruzzo	July 24 – August 16
36	Festa degli Gnomi	Roccaraso (AQ)	July 24–26
37	Sagra del Timballo Teramano	Floriano di Campli (TE)	Last week of July

#	Name	Location	Date
38	Sagra dei Cingoli Cellinesi	Cellino Attanasio (TE)	Last weekend of July
39	La Giostra Cavalleresca in Sulmona	Sulmona (AQ)	July 25–26
40	Festa del Contadino	Forcelle di Tornimparte (AQ)	July 25–26
41	Sagra della Pizza Scima	Casoli (CH)	July 25–27
42	La Via delle Cantine	Rocca di Botte (AQ)	End of July
43	Palio delle Botti	Corropoli (TE)	End of July
44	Sagra del Baccalà in Sant'Omero	Sant'Omero (TE)	End of July
45	Sagra delle Sagne e Ceci	Francavilla al Mare (CH)	End of July
46	Sagra delle 'Ndernappe	Monteodorisio (CH)	End of July
47	Mons Pagus A.D. 1566 Festival	Montepagano (TE)	End of July
48	Sagra & Profana	Loreto Aprutino (PE)	End of July
49	Festival della Montagna	Fara San Martino (CH)	End of July
50	Festa della Trebbiatura	Alanno (PE)	End of July
51	Sagra del Tacchino alla Canzanese	Canzano (TE)	End of July
52	The Sagra della Marrocca	Casalincontrada (PE)	End of July
53	Dining with the Byzantines	Crecchio (CH)	End of July
54	Festival of Sant'Andrea in Pescara	Pescara	Last weekend of July
55	Jazz Festival Muntagninjazz	Various locations near Sulmona	End of July – August
56	Guardiagrele Opera Festival	Guardiagrele (CH)	End of July – August
57	Fermenti Beer Festival	Pescara	July 27–31
58	Sagra di Controguerra	Controguerra (TE)	July 28 – August 2
— AUGUST —			
59	Tagliacozzo Mid-Summer Festival	Tagliacozzo (AQ)	August
60	Sagra Pipindune e Ove	Collecervino (PE)	August 1–4
61	Il Certame di Popoli Terme	Popoli Terme (PE)	August 2
62	Rassegna degli Ovini	Campo Imperatore (AQ)	First week of August / August 4
63	Sagra delle Lumache	Bellante (TE)	First week of August
64	Garrufo con Gusto	Garrufo di Sant'Omero (TE)	First week of August
65	Pecure Allu Cuture	Pacentro (AQ)	First weekend of August
66	Borgo Universo	Aielli (AQ)	First week of August
67	Roccaraso Vola	Roccaraso (AQ)	First week of August
68	Festa del Contadino	Atessa (CH)	First week of August
69	Sagra dei Piatti Tipici	Corropoli (TE)	First week of August
70	Pecorino and Pecorini Cheese and Wine Festival	Farindola (PE)	First week of August
71	Sagra del Pane Casareccio	Penna Sant'Andrea (TE)	First week of August
72	Magnamajella in Serramonacesca	Serramonacesca (PE)	First week of August
73	Ceci della Sposa	Pescasseroli (AQ)	First week of August
74	Sagra della Triglia e del Pesce Fritto	Villa San Nicola a Ortona (CH)	First week of August
75	Sagra della Patata	Avezzano (AQ)	First week of August
76	The Battle Between Turks and Christians	Tollo (CH)	First week of August
77	Festa della Fara Cipollara	Fara Filiorum Petri (CH)	First weekend of August
78	Val Fino al Canto	Arsita (TE)	Beginning of August

#	Name	Location	Date
79	Antica Fiera di San Donato	Castiglione Messer Raimondo (TE)	August 7
80	Sagra del Vino	Vittorito (AQ)	August 7–8
81	Corti Antiche	Atessa (CH)	August 8
82	Sagra del Prosciutto & Festival del Ddu Bbotte	Basciano (TE)	Second week of August
83	Sagra della Vongola	Tortoreto (TE)	Second week of August
84	Le Ruelle di lu Paese	Scerni (CH)	Second week of August
85	Festival del Peperoncino Piccante	Filetto (CH)	Second week of August
86	Sagra della Scrippella	Elice (PE)	Second week of August
87	Sagra della Pecora alla Callara	Villa Rosa di Martinsicuro (TE)	Second week of August
88	Arti e Mestieri a Palazzo	Castelvecchio Subequo (AQ)	Second week of August
89	Atri a Tavola	Atri (TE)	August 12–13
90	Il Catenaccio in Scanno	Scanno (AQ)	August 14
91	Sfilata dei Palmintieri	Caramanico Terme (PE)	August 14
92	Il Palio delle Pupe	Cappelle sul Tavo (PE)	August 15
93	Lancio del Piatto	Castelli (TE)	August 15
94	Sagra di Torano Nuovo	Torano Nuovo (TE)	Mid-August
95	Sagra della Polta in Pacentro	Pacentro (AQ)	Mid-August
96	Borgustando	Fresagrandinaria (CH)	Mid-August
97	La Ruzzola	Prezza (AQ)	Mid-August
98	La Magia della Luce	Opi (AQ)	Mid-August
99	Sagra de J'Ntremè	Gagliano Aterno (AQ)	Mid-August
100	Sagra dei Cavatelli con la Salsiccia	Tufillo (CH)	Mid-August
101	Sagra della Ventricina	Guilmi (CH)	Mid-August
102	Palio del Barone	Tortoreto (TE)	August 16
103	Sagra delle Campanelle di San Rocco	Vasto (CH)	August 16
104	La Notte delle Streghe	Castel del Monte (AQ)	Third week of August
105	Sagra della Capra alla Neretese	Nereto (TE)	3rd week of August
106	Sagra dei Ceci e dello Zafferano a Navelli	Navelli (AQ)	Third weekend of August
107	Porchetta Festival in Campi	Campoli (TE)	August 18–23
108	Festival del Peperone Dolce di Altino	Altino (CH)	August 21–22
109	Mostra Mercato del Tartufo	Quadri (CH)	August 23–24
110	Sagra Fregnacce e degli Arrostiticini	Cermignano (TE)	End of August
111	Sagra della Pappardella al Sugo di Papera	Cermignano (TE)	End of August
112	Sagra degli Gnocchi Opiani	Opi (AQ)	End of August
113	Sagra degli Gnocchi	Sant'Egidio alla Vibrata (TE)	End of August
114	Gironi Divini	Tagliacozzo (AQ)	End of August
115	La Fiera di Sant'Egidio in Lanciano	Lanciano (CH)	End of August
116	Sagra della Porchetta	Lentella (CH)	End of August
117	Sagra della Patata	Barisciano (AQ)	End of August
118	Enotirino Wine Festival	Bussi sul Tirino (PE)	End of August

#	Name	Location	Date
119	Sagra dei dolci tipici locali	Mozzagogna (CH)	End of August
120	Il Mastrogiurato (Medieval Week in Lanciano)	Lanciano (CH)	Last Sunday of August
121	La Perdonanza	L'Aquila	End of August (Aug 28–29)

JUNE

FESTA DELLA PASTORIZIA

When: June 27

Where: Rendinara (AQ)

Additional information: See the full programme on the ProLoco's [page](#).



An annual event (it will be the 28th edition this year) dedicated to celebrating the local shepherding tradition. Held in Rendinara, a tiny hamlet of the Morino municipality, the festival offers visitors the chance to observe traditional ricotta production carried out by local shepherds. Attendees can also sample typical regional dishes such as *mezze maniche all'amatriciana*, slow-cooked lamb ("*al cotturo*"), lamb grilled over embers, and classic *arrostiticini*. In addition to food stands, the festival includes workshops focused on shepherd life, guided hikes, live folk music and traditional dances.

While you are there: take a walk to the top of the hamlet and sit on the oversized Big Bench to enjoy panoramic views of the Roveto Valley.

SAGRA DEL FORMAGGIO FRITTO

Where: Torricella Sicura (TE)

When: June 12-14

Additional information: More details on the town's ProLoco [page](#)



Now in its 26th year, the *Sagra del Formaggio Fritto* returns to the hamlet of Villa Popolo, in the municipality of Torricella Sicura. Fried cheese is one of the most beloved dishes of the traditional Teramano kitchen, and this festival celebrates it in true Abruzzese style. Come hungry – there will be also *arrostiticini*, grilled sausages, and plenty to drink, all accompanied by live music.

SAGRA DELLE CILIEGIE

Where: Giuliano Teatino (CH)

When: June 8

Additional information: See the full programme on the ProLoco's [page](#)

One of Abruzzo's most cherished early-summer traditions, the Sagra delle Ciliegie returns to Giuliano Teatino for its 38th edition. Expect freshly picked cherries, local produce stands, a cherry cake competition, costumed floats, and a tractor parade through the town's streets.

Some of Abruzzo's finest cherries grow in Giuliano Teatino – classified as a Traditional Agri-food Product (PAT), Italy's protected designation for heritage foods.

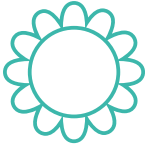


INFIORATA

Where: Roccascalegna (CH)

When: June 7

Additional information: More details on the event's [page](#)



Every year for Corpus Domini, the streets and squares of Roccascalegna are carpeted with intricate sacred images made from flowers and coloured woodchips. The result is one of Abruzzo's most atmospheric street art traditions – and seen from the castle above, it's breathtaking.

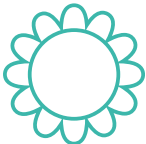
While you're there: Don't miss Castello di Roccascalegna, one of the most striking castles in Abruzzo. Tickets are €4 per person and can be booked online to avoid long queues. English-language tours are available if booked at least a week in advance via the castle's [website](#) or WhatsApp at 0039 335 8767589.

INFIORATA

Where: Casoli (CH)

When: June 7

Additional information: More details on the event's [page](#)



Another unmissable Infiorata, and one with real community heart – local schools and families spend the day before laying out intricate sacred images in flowers and coloured woodchips across the town. The organisers publish a map of the route so you can follow the trail at your own pace.

Combine both: Casoli and Roccascalegna are only 30 minutes apart by car, making it easy to take in both Infiorate in a single day.

GIRI DI PINTA

Where: Spoltore (PE)

When: June 12-14

Additional information: For details see the ProLoco's page on [Facebook](#) and the event's official Instagram [page](#)



A new event that we hope becomes a yearly fixture, Giri di Pinta is a craft beer trail showcasing Italian small independent breweries, winding through the streets of Spoltore's historic centre with music and the kind of easy, wandering energy that makes you feel summer has properly begun.

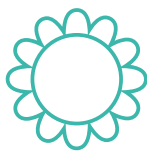
Tokens for buying beer are already on sale [online](#) – you can also buy them on the night, but arrive early or expect a queue.

SAGRA DELLE CILIEGIE

When: June 5-7

Where: Raiano (AQ)

Additional information: See the full programme on the festival's [page](#)



In the first week of June, Raiano celebrates the 69th edition of La Maggiolata, also known as the Sagra delle Ciliegie, one of the oldest festivals in the region, held alongside the feast of the town's patron saint, San Venanzio. What began as a singing event evolved in the mid-20th century into a full-scale cherry festival, with allegorical floats, traditional costumes, local choirs, and food stands that draw large crowds each year. The programme also includes live music, performances, competitions dedicated to the cherry in all its forms, and guided tours of the town's murals in English and Italian, alongside excursions into the nearby Gole di San Venanzio Regional Nature Reserve, where the hermitage of San Venanzio stands between steep gorge walls above the waters of the Aterno River.

BORGO DIVINO

When: June 12-14

Where: Città Sant'Angelo (PE)

Additional information: See the programme and buy tickets on the event's [website](#)



For the fifth consecutive year, Borgo diVino returns to Città Sant'Angelo with three evenings dedicated to wine, food, and live music. Across the festival, 31 wineries from Abruzzo and other Italian regions will offer tastings ranging from local favourites to lesser-known labels, while food stalls serve regional dishes and street food throughout the evening. Entry is free, while a €20 voucher gives visitors eight wine tastings of their choice from participating wineries, with a refundable €2 deposit for the tasting glass. Food can be purchased separately.

NOTTE ROMANTICA

When: June 27

Where: Scanno (AQ) and other towns

Additional information: The programme for Scanno will be available on the ProLoco's [page](#).



Each June, Abruzzo takes part in the Notte Romantica, a nationwide event organised by *I Borghi più belli d'Italia*, an association that promotes and preserves small Italian towns of historical and artistic interest. The event brings twilight concerts, candlelit walks, and guided tours to Abruzzo's most beautiful towns. In Scanno, for instance, you can see local women dressed in the traditional costume for the occasion. Other participating villages include Penne, Tagliacozzo, Casoli, and Opi – each offering their own programme. The event's location will be published shortly on the *I Borghi più belli d'Italia* [website](#).

BUCCHIANICO IN FESTA

When: June 25-28

Where: Bucchianico (CH)

Additional information: See the full programme on the festival's [Facebook page](#).



A four-day bonanza of music, dances, food, and wine in the pretty hill-top town of Bucchianico. Food stands will be serving street fare, beer, and wine to enjoy while listening to live pop music concerts. There will be a small market with local farmers selling cheese, cured meats, olive oil, and honey. Put on your disco garb to groove to the 80s and 90s music and enjoy swing, country, and blues!

While you're there: Visit the private [Olive Oil Museum](#) located in an 18th-century mill run by a local family to learn about the history and production of the famous local oil. Booking essential.

CLASSICAL MUSIC IN ALBA FUCENS

When: June 29 – August 22

Where: Massa D'Albe, Rocca di Cambio, Rocca di Mezzo, Rosciolo

Additional information: See the full line-up and book tickets on the festival's [website](#).



The 8th edition of Festiv'Alba brings music and theatre to the stunning ancient Roman amphitheatre of Alba Fucens, medieval churches of Santa Maria in Valle Porclaneta in Rosciolo, Santa Lucia in Rocca di Cambio and the highland plateau of Piani di Pezza in Rocca di Mezzo. The programme includes 31 live performances: concerts of Baroque music, Beethoven, Vivaldi, several operas as well as some rock and pop music.

While you're there: Stroll among the glorious ruins of what once was a Roman megacity. Guided tours can be booked in the local tourist office, on the main piazza.

UN CASTELLO DI BIRRA

When: June 16-21

Where: Sant'Omero (TE)

Additional information: The full programme is available on the organisers' [page](#)



A lively event in the streets and squares of Sant'Omero's historic centre. Showcasing an impressive selection of craft beers from local, national, and international breweries, the festival offers a gastronomic delight with wood-fired pizza, arrosticini, and porchetta. Each evening, there will be live music, followed by DJ sets. Visitors can also explore the town's historic landmarks like the well of Palazzo Tanzj and the Palazzo Alvaro de Mendoza.

A LOVE SUPREME - CAPESTRANO INCONTRI JAZZ

When: June 26-28

Where: Capestrano (AQ)

Additional information: See the full programme on the organisers' [page](#).



A series of jazz concerts organised by the Associazione Culturale Musicarti. The fourth edition this year will mark the centenary of John Coltrane's birth with a carefully curated, unconventional programme of concerts within the magnificent setting of the church of San Pietro ad Oratorium.

While you're there: on the left side of the church entrance, you can see the mysterious Sator Square. It contains a five-word Latin palindrome: Sator, Arepo, Tenet, Opera, Rotas. The text may be read in any direction, rotated 180 degrees and still be read the same way. While these inscriptions have been found in several locations across Europe, their significance is still unclear.

ABRUZZO IN BOLLA

When: June 20-22

Where: L'Aquila

Additional information: See the full programme [here](#)



This event celebrates the art of sparkling wine production, offering masterclasses, tasting booths, and talks designed for enthusiasts, experts, and industry professionals alike. Visitors can sample wines directly from producers and attend sessions featuring some of the most prominent producers of Italian sparkling wine. The event will be held at Palazzo dell'Emiciclo, the seat of the Regional Council. Show cooking and food corners will be set up under the colonnade and the winter garden. Tickets cost €20 and can be purchased [online](#) for four sparkling wine tastings with a glass.

JULY

FESTA DEL PEPERONE

When: first week of July

Where: Sant'Onofrio, Campoli (TE)

Additional information: See the full programme and this year's dates on the organisers' [page](#)

A small, joyful food festival featuring the *peperone di Sant'Onofrio*, a pepper specific to the area and the region. The feast's menu features various dishes with the pepper: pancakes, stuffed peppers, pasta, and the traditional local specialty *paparille pummadore ove e saggicce* (peppers and tomatoes with egg and sausage).



LA VIA DELLE CANTINE

When: end of July

Where: Rocca di Botte (AQ)

Additional information: This year's dates will be announced on the municipality's [page](#) soon

Each summer, Rocca di Botte transforms its medieval lanes into an open-air route of food, wine, and music during La Via delle Cantine, now celebrating its twentieth edition. The event unfolds along the town's historic "wine cellar road", where visitors wander through stone alleyways stopping at tasting points, artisan stalls, and demonstrations of traditional trades, while travelling musicians animate the streets late into the evening. Built around local producers and regional flavours, the festival has grown into one of the area's best-loved summer gatherings, blending gastronomy with the atmosphere of the old village itself.



PINTA TRA I DIPINTI

Where: Casoli Di Atri (TE)

When: July 8-12

Additional information: The full programme will be available on the organisers' [page](#)

For five summer nights, the hilltop village of Casoli di Atri turns into an open-air gallery during *Pinta tra i Dipinti*, a festival that blends art, craft beer, music, and street food along narrow lanes of the historic centre. Now in its 9th edition, the event brings together local and national artists exhibiting paintings, sculptures, and installations throughout the borgo, alongside live painting performances inspired by the landscape and atmosphere of the village itself. More than 60 craft beers from regional breweries are poured across the festival, accompanied by Abruzzese specialities.



PANE E PACE

Where: Frattura Vecchia (AQ)

When: July 6

Additional information: See the full programme on the De Rerum Natura [Instagram](#) or Facebook [pages](#)



In the mountain hamlet of Frattura Vecchia, the third edition of “Pane e Pace” unfolds as an event that moves beyond the format of a traditional village festival, shaped instead as a reflection on land, food, and the fragile future of inland communities. Organised by the APS De Rerum Natura, the initiative brings together local producers and small businesses in an effort to strengthen regional food networks and promote Abruzzese mountain products rooted in sustainable practices and local identity. The day begins at 11am with a re-enactment of traditional wheat threshing accompanied by folk music and songs, followed by “Storia e Cibo” from midday, where chefs and winemakers present regional dishes and artisanal wines in a shared table that connects culinary memory with the landscape from which it comes. Stunning location, amazing atmosphere, excellent food and wine!

ABRUZZO GRAN TOUR

When: July 1-6

Where: Avezzano (AQ)

Additional information: See the full programme on the The Avezzano Circuit – Abruzzo Gran Tour [website](#)



The Avezzano Circuit – Abruzzo Gran Tour is a much-awaited event for Avezzano and the region. It is one of the most important international events for classic car lovers attracting thousands of spectators. The cars will cruise our spectacular mountain roads with sharp bends and panoramic vistas. One of the highlights of the rally is the Concorso di eleganza, a public voting that attracts around 6000 spectators who choose the most elegant car by ballot. There you can see the classic cars close up, talk to their lucky owners, and cast your vote.

SAGRA DELL'AGLIO ROSSO DI SULMONA

When: July 10-11

Where: Campo di Fano (AQ)

Additional information: This year's dates and full programme will be published on the event's [page](#)



The *sagra* celebrates the local red garlic – a distinctive variety known for its delicate flavour and long shelf life – the festival was founded to safeguard and promote *aglio rosso di Sulmona*, which remains an important source of income for local farmers. Food stalls, tastings, and traditional dishes all centre around the star ingredient – garlic, it is a cheerful (and fragrant) festival that draws big crowds.

MARE DI BRACE

When: July 7-12

Where: Tortoreto (TE)

Additional information: The full details are published on the organisers' [page](#).



For several evenings, Tortoreto will celebrate all things grilled with *arrostiticini* leading the way alongside Angus steaks, grilled sausages, panini sandwiches, and baked goodies.

For six days, the air will be filled with music, laughter, and the buzz of family-friendly activities, including inflatable play areas for children. As dusk deepens, there will be live concerts.

SAGRA DI PIZZA FRITTA

When: first week of July

Where: Turrivalignani (PE)

Additional information: Full details and this year's dates will be announced on the Pro Loco's [page](#).



Now in its 24rd year, the *sagra* takes place in Piazza Berlinguer, in the town centre. Stalls serve hearty street food, with the simple yet much-loved pizza fritta as the star of the event. This plain, deep-fried pizza is topped with just a sprinkle of salt, a humble classic that never fails to draw a crowd in Abruzzo. Live music and traditional dances begin at 9pm.

ASCANIO FESTIVAL

When: mid-July

Where: Tagliacozzo (AQ)

Additional information: The full programme and this year's dates will be published shortly on the event's [page](#)



The Ascanio Festival is a three-day historical Renaissance reenactment celebration held in the historic centre of Tagliacozzo, honouring the town's renowned goldsmith Ascanio Mari, a protégé of Benvenuto Cellini. The event transforms the town into a lively stage filled with flag-throwers, jugglers, fortune-tellers, and street performers, alongside a medieval craft market and nightly Renaissance banquets (advance booking is required). Local restaurants join in with themed menus, offering a taste of ancient recipes.

BIRRART CRAFT BEER FESTIVAL

When: mid-July

Where: Tagliacozzo (AQ)

Additional information: This year's dates and full programme will be published on the organisers' [page](#)



The 15th edition of Tagliacozzo's Craft Beer Festival brings together master brewers from across the region, offering visitors the chance to taste Abruzzo's finest craft beers. Alongside the brews, food stalls and artisans will be selling local crafts and typical products. All of this is complemented by an eclectic programme of live music and street performances.

SAGRA DELLA FRITTELLA ORNANESE

When: July 16-19

Where: Ornano Grande di Colledara (TE)

Additional information: The date and full programme will be available on the event's Facebook [page](#).



Now in its 20th year, the festival runs for four evenings from 7 pm, with food stands offering traditional foods. The star of the event is the *frittella ornanese* – a dough pressed and fried then filled with prosciutto, cheeses, cured meats, and a special mushroom sauce. In addition to classic fillings, the *frittella* is also served with inventive combinations such as tomato and peppers, eggs and peppers, and the renowned *porchetta* from Colledara. All this is perfectly paired with quality beer. Each evening includes live music. A small, very local, but full of cheer event!

CALICI DI STELLE

When: July 24 - August 16

Where: Ortona and wineries across Abruzzo

Additional information: The full programme will be available on the organisers' [website](#) and Facebook [page](#).



From the end of July and throughout August, Abruzzo joins in *Calici di Stelle* – Italy's beloved celebration of wine under the stars. Organised by the Movimento Turismo del Vino, the event brings together wineries and music for a month-long toast to summer nights.

The gala event is held at the Aragonese Castle in Ortona, where over 30 wineries offer tastings within the walls of the cliffside fortress, overlooking the shimmering *Costa dei Trabocchi*. Across the region, dozens of wineries host their own evenings with live music, food, and the occasional telescope – inviting visitors to sip, savour, and look skyward.

SAGRA DELLE SAGNE E CECI

When: end of July

Where: Francavilla al Mare (CH)

Additional information: This year's dates and full programme will be published on the event's [page](#)



Food festival celebrating the local dish *sagne e ceci* (pasta with chickpeas) for three evenings as part of a wider festival, *Foro in Festa*. Food stands sell other typical dishes and wine. Live music every evening.

PESCARA JAZZ FESTIVAL

When: second week of July

Where: Pescara

Additional information: To see this year's dates, the full programme and book tickets, go to Pescara Jazz Festival [website](#)



Every summer since 1969, Pescara has welcomed international jazz musicians. Over the years, some of the greatest jazz performers from around the world have participated in the festival. Concerts take place in the city's open-air theatre and some smaller locations that host free concerts.

SAGRA DELLE 'NDERNAPPE

When: end of July

Where: Montedodorio (CH)

Additional information: This year's dates and full programme will be available on the event's Facebook [page](#)



A traditional food festival celebrating one of Abruzzo's lesser-known but historically significant pasta dishes. 'Ndernappe are handmade using tritello flour – a mixture of white flour and wheat bran – blended simply with water and salt. The pasta is served with a rustic sauce made from locally produced ventricina, a slightly spicy, cured pork salami typical of the area. The stalls at the sagra will also be dishing out by cheese-and-egg pallotte casce ove, another traditional staple in the area.

SPONTANEA ABRUZZO SUMMER

When: July 12

Where: Pescara

Additional information: See the full programme on the event's [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#) pages.



At the Porto Turistico of Pescara, SPONTANEA ABRUZZO SUMMER brings together some of the region's most thoughtful wine producers for an evening centred on spontaneous fermentation, sustainability, and biodiversity. Organised by FISAR Pescara and Slow Food Pescara as part of the 40th Mediterranean Exhibition, the event focuses on wines, olive oil, and artisanal foods shaped by careful farming practices and a close relationship with the land. Held in the Pala Becci from 7pm to midnight, the market-style gathering allows visitors to taste, meet producers, and buy directly from wineries and food makers, offering a portrait of Abruzzo through its flavours, soils, and agricultural traditions. Free entrance; tastings €15 per person plus €5 deposit for the wine glass (refundable).

SAGRA DEL TIMBALLO TERAMANO

Where: Floriano di Campoli (TE)

When: the last week of July

Additional information: This year's date and full programme will be available soon on the ProLoco's [page](#)



For seven nights, Floriano di Campoli puts the famous dish from the Teramo province front and centre at the Sagra del Timballo Teramano in Piazza Anfiteatro. Thick slices of timballo emerge from steaming trays alongside arrosticini, fried cheese, fritters, and other staples of the local table, while music and evening performances keep the square alive well past sunset. One of Abruzzo's most popular food festivals, it opens nightly from 7.30pm, with covered seating, takeaway options, free shuttle services, and a fully plastic-free setup using biodegradable plates, cups, and cutlery.

MONS PAGUS A.D. 1566 FESTIVAL

When: end of July

Where: Montepagano (TE)

Additional information: This year's dates will be published on the event's [page](#)



The picturesque town of Montepagano, with its Renaissance layout of arched gateways, churches, piazzas, noble palaces and panoramic terraces, offers a natural stage for a historic re-enactment. In its the seventh edition, Mons Pagus A.D. 1566 brings drummers, falconers, flag-throwers, fire-eaters and travelling performers to the streets. Central to the event is the grand Renaissance parade, with over 200 costumed participants.

Visitors will find artisan food stalls inside the old fondaci, selling *porchetta*, *arrosticini*, sweet fritters, local beer and more. Entry costs €5 per person, with free admission for children under 12 and Montepagano residents. A shuttle service from Roseto degli Abruzzi will run during the event.

CORSA DEL CAPPELLO

When: July 3-5

Where: Paganica (AQ)

Additional information: Full programme and times can be found on the event's Facebook [page](#)



Replicates a relay race between the town's neighbourhoods begun in the town in the 17th century in which hats are used instead of batons to hand off. It took place during the celebrations of the Madonna dell'Assunta, which at that time was the most solemn festival of the year. For a long time, all traces of the "hat race" were lost, but in 1973, the town revived the tradition. Everyone gathers to cheer the runners, and the atmosphere is festive with food and wine at the end of each day.



LA GIOSTRA CAVALLERESCA IN SULMONA

When: July 25-26

Where: Sulmona (AQ)

Additional information: This year's dates and full programme available on the festival's [website](#).



This is one of the biggest summer festivals in Abruzzo attracting thousands of spectators. The city's largest piazza is transformed into a Medieval arena, complete with sand, damsels, galloping horses, and knights. The Knightly Joust features tournaments over two weekends in late July and early August. Before each competition, 600 locals decked out in gorgeous replicas of 15th-16th century costumes walk in a procession along Corso Ovidio to Piazza Garibaldi. The main events are scheduled for 25-26 July; for other competitions within the festival programme, check the website.

GUARDIAGRELE OPERA FESTIVAL

When: end of July-August

Where: Guardiagrele (CH)

Additional information: This year's dates and programme will be announced on the festival's [website](#) and Facebook [page](#).



Summer evenings in the beautiful town of Guardiagrele are filled with classical music. Excellent operas and concerts are held in picturesque squares and the town's churches. Book your tickets early as they sell out fast.

While you're there: Visit the permanent exhibition of Abruzzo's Artistic Craftsmanship ([Ente Mostra dell'Artigianato Artistico Abruzzese](#)) to see the masterpieces made by the region's goldsmiths, ceramists, blacksmiths, stonecutters and other artisans.

FESTA DEL CONTADINO

When: July 25-26

Where: Forcelle di Tornimparte (AQ)

Additional information: The full programme is published on the organisers' Facebook [page](#)



FESTIVAL DELLA MONTAGNA

When: end of July

Where: Fara San Martino (CH)

Additional information: The details will be available on the festival's [page](#) shortly.



FESTA DELLA TREBBIATURA

When: end of July

Where: Alanno (PE)

Additional information: The date for this year will be announced soon on the [Circolo Oratorio](#) and [Comune di Alanno](#) pages



A dive into the past, the Farmer's Festival evokes the lifestyle of the past. You can take part in haymaking and cheese-making, watch a hay bale rolling competition, and enjoy a tractor parade. Food stands will sell typical local dishes such as *stringozzi alla contadina*, goat and sheep stew, *zampanella*, sausages with beans, peasant soup, and *arrosticini*. Live concerts every evening.

One of Abruzzo's newer festivals, it draws lively crowds to the picturesque mountain town of Fara San Martino. The three-day programme is packed with guided walks for various fitness levels, a trail running competition, a photo exhibition, food and wine tastings, and live music concerts.

One of the most local, least touristy festivals in this supplement – and all the better for it. Organised by the village's own Circolo Oratorio, this is a full day rooted in Abruzzo's farming traditions, starting early with a parade of vintage tractors through the village streets at 8am, followed by the blessing of the tractors, historical re-enactments of fieldwork, food stands, beer, wine, and live folk music.

The centrepiece is the pranzo della tresca – the traditional threshers' lunch – which must be booked in advance via the organisers' page. The day ends as it should: with a grand dance in the piazza, open to everyone.



TRUFFLE FESTIVAL IN CAMPOVALANO

When: mid-July

Where: Campovalano (TE)

Additional information: this year's dates will be announced on the organisers' [Facebook page](#)



A week-long truffle feast in Campovalano accompanied by live concerts. Food stands will be selling dishes with local truffles every evening. The hugely popular Sagra del Tartufo attracting thousands of people is plastic-free, so only biodegradable plates and cutlery are used.

While you're there: During the festival, you can also visit the archaeological site Necropoli di Campovalano, an ancient necropolis, one of the biggest and best-preserved in Central Italy, to see some fascinating artifacts going as far back as the late Bronze Age.

SAGRA & PROFANA

When: end of July

Where: Loreto Aprutino (PE)

Additional information: For this year's dates and details see the ProLoco's [page](#)



The event fills the town with craft stalls, traditional Abruzzese food, and cultural happenings. A highlight is the Notte Bianca, when the historic centre is closed to traffic and lit by torches. The town's museums will be open late at night and artisans will be doing traditional crafts demonstrations.

While you are there: Visit the town's small botanical garden, home to a variety of lush plants. It has a viewpoint within a small olive grove with a stunning panoramic view of Loreto Aprutino. Book your visit via the garden's [page](#).

CERASUM – TORTORETO CERASUOLO FESTIVAL

Where: Tortoreto (TE)

When: July 4-6

Additional information: For more details see the event's [page](#)



Part of the wider Tortoreto Greendays programme, Cerasum is a dedicated celebration of Abruzzo's beloved cerasuolo – the region's distinctive cherry-red rosé. Expect guided tastings, pairings with local produce, and a cultural programme woven around one of Abruzzo's most characterful wines. A firm favourite with locals and visitors alike, it draws thousands of people to the historic centre of the town across its three evenings.

While you're there: Explore Tortoreto, a medieval hilltop old town, just 3km from the coast, with the 18th-century Town Hall, the Clock Tower, ancient churches, and the remains of old city walls. From the Fortezza belvedere, a former military lookout, the view stretches along the entire coastline.

JAZZ FESTIVAL MUNTAGNINJAZZ

When: end of July-August

Where: various locations in and around Sulmona

Additional information: See the full programme on the festival's Facebook [page](#) or its [website](#).



The Muntagninjazz festival is one of the biggest music events in the Valley Peligna. The festival aims to bring music to small mountain locations and the venues include such towns as Introdacqua, Bugnara, Pacentro, Campo di Giove, and Sulmona. Some big names in Italian music perform every year. Dozens of concerts, many of them free, will also include open-air piano performances on the beautiful streets of Sulmona.

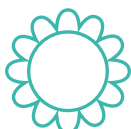
FESTIVAL OF SANT'ANDREA IN PESCARA

When: last weekend of July

Where: Pescara

Additional information: The detailed programme of the festival will be published soon on the organiser's Facebook [page](#).

The last weekend of July, the city of Pescara celebrates the Feast of Saint Andrew, the Patron Saint of fishermen. On Saturday evening, food stands are set up on Piazza Sant'Andrea and concerts begin. The morning after, a procession of fishing boats takes the statue of the saint to the harbour. The festival's programme is filled with music and theatrical performances. The following Monday evening it finishes with a grand firework display that is watched by thousands of people from the beach.





DINING WITH THE BYZANTINES

When: end of July

Where: Crecchio (CH)

Additional information: The dates will be announced soon on the festival's [page](#).



The hugely popular festival *A Cena con i Bizantini* is a throwback to the 6-7th century when the Byzantines settled along the coast of the Chieti province. During the festival's three days the small village of Crecchio is animated with processions in historical costumes, medieval music, and dances. You can taste ancient Byzantine dishes and watch medieval crafts and trades demonstrations.

While you are there: Visit the town's medieval castle (haunted, according to the locals).

CONCERTI DELLE ABBAZIE

When: July 1 – August 5

Where: Various locations in the province of Teramo.

Additional information: the dates, and programme will be published on the festival's [website](#)



Since 2015, every summer, five Benedictine abbeys in the province of Teramo become venues for a series of classical music and jazz concerts. Over the years, many renowned and young international musicians have performed during the festival. The abbeys are located in the scenic valleys between the Vomano and Mavone rivers, which are popular areas for hiking and outdoor recreation. Participating towns include Cellino Attanasio, Pineto, Roseto degli Abruzzo, Mutignano, Mosciano Sant' Angelo. During the festival, guided visits to the abbeys, and towns will be organised as well as wine and traditional food tastings.

SAGRA DELLA COCOCCIATA

When: July 18

Where: Paterno di Avezzano

Additional information: See the full programme on the organisers' [page](#).



In the hamlet of Paterno, near Avezzano, the Sagra della Cococciata returns for its 17th edition, bringing the rhythms and flavours of the countryside into a shared summer celebration. Organised by the local Pro Loco, the event is dedicated to cococciata, a traditional dish made with zucchini and prepared according to recipes passed down through generations, served alongside variations, fried courgettes, sandwiches, sweets, and local wine from the Cantina del Fucino. Stands open from around 7.30pm, music and group dancing start shortly after.

FERMENTI BEER FESTIVAL

When: July 27-31

Where: Pescara

Additional information: keep an eye on the festival's [page](#) for this year's programme



The festival brings the region's small breweries to the Porto Turistico of Pescara. Now in its 10th edition, it features tastings, workshops, live music, boat excursions, and a gourmet dinner curated in collaboration with Slow Food Abruzzo. Visitors can explore beer and food pairings, meet the brewers and enjoy quality street food. With over 15,000 visitors over five days and 21,000 beers poured at last year's edition, it is one of Abruzzo's biggest events.

SAGRA DELLA PIZZA SCIMA

When: July 25-27

Where: Casoli (CH)

Additional information: See the full programme on the event's [page](#)



The festival is dedicated to a traditional local flatbread made without yeast, following an ancient peasant recipe. This crumbly pizza is prepared with flour, extra virgin olive oil, and white wine, and is always broken by hand rather than cut with a knife. In addition to pizza scima, you can try totera, a local dessert, along with other regional products.

FESTA DELLA TREBBIATURA AND SAGRA DELLA FRITTELLA

When: mid-July

Where: Collepietro Mosciano Sant'Angelo (TE)

Additional information: See this year's dates and programme on the organisers' Facebook [page](#)



A historical re-enactment of traditional threshing. Abruzzo is historically an agricultural region – its economy has been based on farming for centuries and many traditional festivals reflect that. This small event is all about threshing – separating grains from the plants during the harvest. In the past, it was always celebrated as the end of a long season of hard work. The four days of this festival honours the summer harvest rituals and celebration of wheat.

The festival is combined with the *Sagra della fritella* – a humble fried dough delicacy that is enjoyed plain or topped with prosciutto or sugar.

The festival attracts mainly locals and includes food stands, live music, dancing, and games for children. There is also the possibility of horseback riding.

SAGRA DEI CINGOLI CELLINESI

When: the last weekend of July

Where: Cellino Attanasio (TE)

Additional information: keep an eye on the ProLoco [page](#) for this year's dates



Like many small towns in Abruzzo, Cellino Attanasio has its own special pasta: *cingoli Cellinesi*. Its origins go back to the medieval times when the town's Franciscan friars enjoyed it during religious feasts. Made with humble ingredients – flour, potatoes, and water – it is served with a tomato duck sauce of Cellino Attanasio.

On festival days, in addition to the *cingoli* pasta, you can taste other local delicacies (one of them is a dessert appetisingly called *l'ombelico del frate*, or the friar's navel). Recently, a vegetarian option of *cingoli* has been added to the festival's menu. The evenings are animated with live music and a crafts market.

SAGRA DEL TACCHINO ALLA CANZANESE

When: end of July

Where: Canzano (TE)

Additional information: Find more details on the consortium's [website](#).

The programme and menus are posted on the festival's Facebook [page](#) a few weeks before the event



The festival celebrates *tacchino alla canzanese*, a local turkey dish, that was invented in the town a few centuries ago. The meat is flavoured with white wine, garlic, rosemary, and peppercorns, slowly cooked, and served cold. Apparently, the dish was given to American astronaut Neil Armstrong as a provision on his trip to the moon.

At the *sagra* you can enjoy not only *tacchino alla canzanese*, but also other traditional dishes from the Teramo province. It is, undoubtedly, one of the best food festivals in Abruzzo. The turkey meat for the *sagra* comes from a consortium of local farms that organise the event.

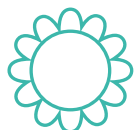


PALIO DELLE BOTTI

When: end of July

Where: Corropoli (TE)

Additional information: The dates and full programme will be published on the event's [website](#) and Facebook [page](#)



The *Palio delle Botti* combines the excitement of a race with the grandeur of a Renaissance historical reenactment. Celebrating its 41th anniversary, this competition involves teams from the town's districts, each selecting pairs of "pushers" tasked with rolling a 70 kg barrel up a challenging course. Recognized by the National Federation of Historical Games, the *Palio delle Botti* is now a highly anticipated and celebrated event, drawing significant attention and participation not only from Corropoli but from across the entire Abruzzo region. On the second day of the event, there is also a competition for local kids pushing lighter barrels. The event is always accompanied by evening concerts and excellent street food.

SAGRA DI CONTROGUERRA

When: July 28-August 2

Where: Controguerra (TE)

Additional information: The full programme with the dates for this year will be available on the organisers' [page](#)



The *Sagra di Controguerra* is a much-anticipated annual event, now in its 39th edition, set in the picturesque historic center of the town. Over several days, visitors are invited to indulge in a rich array of traditional dishes, such as the renowned *pappardelle* with duck sauce, *maccheroncini* pasta with meatballs, *formaggio fritto*, and many baked goodies. There will be live music performances spanning genres like swing, jazz, and pop, with different bands performing each night in Piazza Garibaldi.



SAGRA DEL BACCALÀ IN SANT'OMERO

When: end of July

Where: Sant'Omero (TE)

Additional information: the dates of the festival and the programme will be published on the organisers' [Facebook page](#).



FESTA DEGLI GNOMI

When: July 24-26

Where: Roccaraso, località Fonte della Guardia (AQ)

Additional information: Tickets cost between €17 and €30 (for three days) and can be bought online on the festival's [website](#).



Sant' Omero used to be home to one of the largest importers of baccalà, salt-dried cod. No wonder the town boasts numerous baccalà recipes and is considered Abruzzo's "capital of cod". It is also home to the Sagra del Baccalà, celebrated for over 40 years, which involves the preparation of four tons of dried cod in two huge iron vats. For a week, food stands provide samplings of many delectable cod dishes and wines from the best producers in the Val Vibrata area, where Sant'Omero is located. Only Norwegian cod from certified sustainable fisheries is served during the festival.

In July, during the Festival of the Gnomes, a forested area in Roccaraso turns into an enchanted realm teeming with magical creatures. Goblins, elves, and fairies come out of their secret homes to meet children and adults who believe in magic. It is one of Abruzzo's biggest and most popular festivals for families with dances, games, face painting, and theatrical performances. There will be food tracks and picnic areas. Bring your fairy wings and an elf's pointy hat!

UN BORGO DI BIRRA

When: July 13-19

Where: Civitella del Tronto (TE)

Additional information: See the programme on the festival's Facebook [page](#).



In 2014, a group of friends embarked on a mission to bring people to Civitella del Tronto by organizing a beer festival. What started as a modest endeavour has flourished over the years. It attracts 30,000 visitors and dozens of international brewers. Last year's edition showcased a staggering selection of 100 craft beers, brewed in Belgium, England, Germany, Sweden, and the United States. Each night, an array of musical bands entertains the crowds, and the pints are accompanied by street food, burgers, grilled meats, pizza, and *arrosticini*. This year the festival will be held at the magnificent fortress of Civitella del Tronto.

CERASUOLO A MARE

When: July-August

Where: Pescara, Silvi Marina, Città Sant'Angelo, Giulianova, Francavilla al Mare

Additional information: The dates, list of locations, and full programme will be announced on the event's [page](#).



Cerasuolo a Mare festival showcases Abruzzo's excellent rosé (*Cerasuolo*) wines, paired with the region's best dishes. Over the span of several weeks, the festival will unfold across coastal location, from Silvi Marina to Montesilvano, offering visitors tastings of *Cerasuolo* from dozens of local wineries at 50 tasting points on central piazzas and beaches.

THE SAGRA DELLA MARROCCA

When: end of July

Where: Casalincontrada (PE)

Additional information: For more details see the ProLoco's [page](#).



A lively festival held in the historic centre of Casalincontrada, celebrating traditional local cuisine with a focus on *marrocche* (corn). Apart from boiled or grilled corn, you can sample gnocchi, polenta, *pallotte cacio e ova*, *pecora alla callara* (slow cooked sheep meat), *arrosticini*, and tripe, complemented by local wine and beer. During the festival, the town's streets and squares will be filled with street performers, flag-wavers, musicians, and historical re-enactment groups add to the festive atmosphere.

AUGUST

SAGRA DELLE LUMACHE

When: first week of August

Where: Bellante (TE)

Additional information: the dates, menus and full programme will be announced on the festival's [page](#)



At this week-long lively *sagra* you can taste many traditional dishes with... snails: *tagliatelle* pasta with snail sauce, fried snails, *guazzetto* soup, and other tasty local fare. The town's squares will be filled with music and artisans selling their produce.

SAGRA PIPINDUNE E OVE

When: August 1-4

Where: Collecervino (PE)

Additional information: See the full programme on the festival's [page](#)



This year marks the 21st edition of Collecervino's summer festival, dedicated to the traditional dish pipindune e ove – a simple, home-style plate of fried sweet peppers and eggs, once a staple in the kitchens of Abruzzo's farming families.

Held in the town's historic centre, the festival celebrates local flavours with food stalls offering not only pipindune e ove, but also other traditional dishes such as *maccharune alla trescatora* (bucatini with duck sauce once eaten during the wheat harvest, *pimmadore e chicumbre* (can you guess what it means? A tomato and tortarello cucumber salad!), local wines and sweets. The event also brings the town's old crafts to the fore, with artisans and artists animating the streets and reopening ancient workshops for demonstrations.

GARRUFO CON GUSTO

When: first week of August

Where: Garrufo di Sant'Omero (TE)

Additional information: See the festival's dates for this year on the organisers' [page](#)



Celebrating its 21 edition this year, *Garrufo con gusto* is another exciting food festival where you can taste traditional dishes made with strictly local ingredients: *maccheroni di Santa Scolastica* with a rooster meat *ragù*, pasta with sausages and zucchini, chicken stew, olives stuffed with minced beef, fried cheese and many more. The pasta served is made with local *saragolla* heritage grain flour. Add to these some good wine and live music, and you have a perfect week-long festival with a great atmosphere to enjoy on a summer evening.

SAGRA DELLA PECORA ALLA CALLARA

When: first week of August

Where: Villa Rosa di Martinsicuro (TE)

Additional information: This year's dates will be announced on the organisers' [page](#) soon



The festival celebrates one of Abruzzo's oldest, humblest, and most emblematic dishes, pecora alla callara – a slow-cooked sheep meat stew – that was once the staple of shepherds along the seasonal migration routes. The recipe has its roots in the pastoral traditions of the region, and likely came about from the need to make use of old sheep no longer fit for breeding or sale. Alongside *pecora alla callara*, the festival's menu will include a variety of other local specialities: bruschette, fried treats, sausages, truffle tagliatelle, and olive all'ascolana. All accompanied by excellent local wines. The sagra runs for 5 days in the pine grove on Via Franchi.

BORGO UNIVERSO

When: first week of August

Where: Aielli (AQ)

Additional information: For the dates and programme see the organisers' [website](#) and Facebook [page](#)



Borgo Universo is a festival that blends Street Art with astronomy, set against the picturesque backdrop of the beautiful town of Aielli. Every year, the festival invites internationally acclaimed artists to create murals, sculptures, and installations that transform the village into an open-air museum. With over 50 artworks currently on display, Borgo Universo has become a dynamic and ever-evolving cultural landmark, drawing visitors from around the world to see artists at work, listen to live music, and look at the stars from the small astronomical observatory located in a medieval tower at the top of the town.

ROCCARASO VOLA

When: first week of August

Where: Roccaraso (AQ)

Additional information: The full programme will be published on the event's [page](#) and [website](#)



The festival is a colourful display of static and stunt kites soaring through the skies above the Aremogna mountain. It attracts around 20 kite-flying teams from across Italy. Throughout the three-day celebration, attendees can enjoy candy drops from the sky, a bubble party, and participate in kite-making workshops. The festival also includes the spectacular night-time event *Luci in Volo*, with dozens of illuminated kites flown in the night skies.

FESTA DEL CONTADINO

When: first week of August

Where: Atessa (CH)

Additional information: See this year's dates and the full programme on the organisers' [page](#)



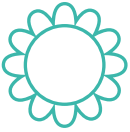
A four-day celebration of rural life, now in its 44th edition. The event honours the town's farming heritage with traditional food tastings, live folk music, and dancing in the piazza. A farmers' fair and an evening of dialect theatre add to the festive atmosphere. It is part of a summer-long programme of festivals and events in Atessa.

IL CERTAME DI POPOLI TERME

Where: Popoli Terme (PE)

When: August 2

Additional information: The full programme is published on the Gruppo Storico Città di Popoli [page](#)



Every summer, the spa town of Popoli Terme steps back into the 14th century for the Certame della Balestra, one of Abruzzo's most atmospheric medieval festivals. Founded in 2005 by the Gruppo Storico Città di Popoli, the event celebrates the legacy of the Cantelmo family, the French-origin dynasty that ruled the area for centuries after arriving in Italy with Charles I of Anjou in 1266. A grand historical procession of nobles, knights, soldiers, and townsfolk in carefully researched period dress winds through the historic centre before the blessing of the crossbowmen and the main contest, where representatives of the town's historic districts compete in a test of precision with ancient bench crossbows. The most anticipated moment is the arrival of Restaino Cantelmo, greeted by drums and bugles, as the winning district claims the palio and the honour of the city for the year ahead.

SAGRA DI TORANO NUOVO

When: mid-August

Where: Torano Nuovo (TE)

Additional information: For this year's dates and more details see the festival's [page](#)



This longstanding annual festival celebrates the culinary heritage of Torano Nuovo, known internationally for its fine wines. Since the 1970s, the event has highlighted the area's key local products: wine, sausages featured in a variety of dishes, and pecorino cheese prepared in a distinctive battered and fried style. You can meet producers, taste and buy a wide range of regional specialties at numerous food stalls throughout the town during the festival's five days. The programme also includes live music performances in the town's squares.

FESTIVAL DEL PEPERONE DOLCE DI ALTINO

When: August 21-22

Where: Altino (CH)

Additional information: the programme and dates are announced on the organisers' [website](#) or their Facebook [page](#)



The small town of Altino hosts a lively festival dedicated to the local red sweet pepper. The town's districts prepare numerous savoury and sweet dishes with peperone dolce: pork belly, turkey, pasta, cakes, ice cream, and more. Visitors pay for tokens and go from one stand to another sampling the festive fare. There are always folk musicians playing on the streets and a great atmosphere.

While you're there: Visit the town's sweet pepper [museum](#) to learn about the history and production (exhibit texts are available in Italian and English) of *peperone dolce* in the area.

SAGRA DEI PIATTI TIPICI

When: first week of August

Where: Corropoli (TE)

Additional information: The full programme and this year's dates will be available on the organisers' [page](#)



Now in its 42nd year, the sagra spans over five evenings. Opening at 7pm, food stands will sell traditional dishes such as fried cheese, grilled goat meat and sausages, sweet fried cremini, baccalà, pasta alla chitarra with pallotine. All accompanied by good local wine and live music.

SAGRA DELLA POLTA IN PACENTRO

When: mid-August

Where: Pacentro (AQ)

Additional information: The date of the festival is announced on the ProLoco Pacentro [page](#)



For some traditional *cucina povera* and a good excuse to wander around the picturesque town of Pacentro head to this small lively evening celebration. The humble traditional dish *polta* that will be served is made with cabbage, beans, and potatoes.

While you're there: Visit the 14th century Caldora Castle at the top of the town, one of the best-preserved fortified structures in Abruzzo.

PORCHETTA FESTIVAL IN CAMPLI

When: August 18-23

Where: Campli (TE)

Additional information: the dates will be announced on the festival's [website](#) and their Facebook [page](#)



One of the oldest food festivals in the region, *la Sagra della porchetta*, will be holding its 53rd edition this year. A dozen Italian *porchetta* producers gather in Campli to compete for the gold medal and, for several days, the town fills up with the divine smells of roasting pork and the sounds of music, as various bands play Italian pop, rock, indie, and Latin American tunes. *Porchetta* is a moist boneless pork roast that has been made in Abruzzo for many centuries.

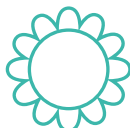
While you're there: Visit [La Scala Santa](#), or the Holy Stairs, which attracts thousands of devotees every year. The twenty-eight wooden steps surrounded by beautiful Baroque frescoes must be ascended on the knees to obtain the remission of sins.

LA NOTTE DELLE STREGHE

When: third week of August

Where: Castel del Monte (AQ)

Additional information: The programme is published on the event's [page](#)



A costumed re-enactment of the ancient ritual that existed in the town for many centuries for curing children whose illness was believed to be caused by witches. Children's clothes were carried through the town to the outskirts, beaten, then burned. The festival is accompanied by music, theatre performances, and a "witch market" selling local produce and magical trinkets.

BORGUSTANDO

When: mid-August

Where: Fresagrandinaria (CH)

Additional information: The date and full programme will be available on the event's Facebook [page](#)



A small lively sagra (summer edition; they also have one in December) with food stands set up along the charming streets of the town. Visitors can taste traditional dishes such as cif e ciaf, spezzatino, scrippelle and many other prepared by local women. There will be live folk music and a great atmosphere

THE BATTLE BETWEEN TURKS AND CHRISTIANS

When: first week of August

Where: Tollo (CH)

Additional information: the dates will be announced on the event's [page](#)



A historical re-enactment of the events of the summer of 1566 when the Turks threatened to invade the town. More than 300 locals will parade along the streets in medieval costume: ladies, knights, pages, courtesans, Christians, Ottomans, musicians, and flag-wavers.

SAGRA DELLA VONGOLA

When: second week of August

Where: Tortoreto (TE)

Additional information: See the menu and details on the event's [page](#)



For nearly half a century (this year will be its 48th), the *Sagra della Vongola* has drawn crowds of both locals and holidaymakers. Centred around the clam – prepared in a variety of traditional ways – the event offers a menu that includes pasta mezzemaniche alle vongole, clams in guazzetto, clams alla marinara, and generous servings of fried seafood. There's no shortage of classic sides either, from olive all'ascolana to golden cremini. All dishes are paired with wines from the nearby Teramo hills. Long communal tables are set up in Piazzale Nassirya, where food stalls open each evening for four nights.

PALIO DEL BARONE

When: August 16

Where: Tortoreto (TE)

Additional information: The full programme will be published on the event's [page](#)



A competition for a banner that commemorates the 1234 visit to the town of Vicar Frederick II, sent by the emperor to visit the Barony of Tortoreto. Features costumed characters representing the dignitaries who visited, a medieval procession of stilt walkers, flag wavers, jesters, musicians, and men in arms.

CORTI ANTICHE

When: August 8

Where: Atessa (CH)

Additional information: The full programme with the map of the food stands and menus is published on the event's [page](#)



Corti antiche transforms Atessa's historic centre with beautiful old courtyards opening for the event. Visitors follow a route from Piazza Oberdan through old courtyards and alleyways, sampling local dishes paired with regional wines and liqueurs, while enjoying a programme of music, theatre, and dance. The festival is committed to reducing waste with the use of compostable plates and cutlery and surplus food donated to local non-profit organisations.



TAGLIACOZZO MID-SUMMER FESTIVAL

When: August

Where: Tagliacozzo (AQ)

Additional information: See this year's dates and the full programme on the festival's [page](#) and [website](#)



In August, the beautiful town of Tagliacozzo fills with the sounds of music. Local convents, churches, and town squares become venues for classical music and jazz concerts, dance performances and book presentations. Watch an opera under the stars, listen to Rossini and Tchaikovsky at sunrise or attend a concert in a beech forest at sunset – there will be plenty of unforgettable experiences. Many concerts are free.

PECORINO AND PECORINI CHEESE AND WINE FESTIVAL

When: first week of August

Where: Farindola (PE)

Additional information: For this year's dates and programme check out the festival's [website](#) or Facebook [page](#)

Farindola, the southeastern gateway to the Gran Sasso e Monti della Laga National Park, is home to a rare, prized sheep's milk cheese made by only 20 family-run farms. During the festival, you can sample wines by some of the region's best producers (including Pecorino, a white wine made from a native grape variety), taste *pecorino* cheese and traditional dishes made with it (food stalls offer fixed menus), and listen to live concerts. The festival runs for three evenings and offers a chance to escape the summer heat in the cooler mountains.





IL CATENACCIO IN SCANNO

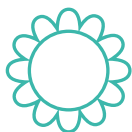
When: August 14

Where: Scanno (AQ)

Additional information: Keep an eye out for the programme announcement [here](#)

One of the most beautiful events in Abruzzo, *Il Catenaccio* (or “*Ju Catenacce*” in dialect), a re-enactment of an ancient marriage procession. Locals, dressed in traditional festive costumes, walk the narrow streets of the medieval village in pairs, led by the bride and groom. The women’s costumes are made exactly the way they were in the 1700s. The procession finishes in the central square with dances and traditional music.

While you’re there: Take a dip in the cool waters of the Scanno Lake which has been awarded Blue Flags for several years for its water quality.



MAGNAMAJELLA IN SERRAMONACESCA

When: first week of August

Where: Serramonacesca (PE)

Additional information: See the organisers’ Facebook [page](#) for more details

An annual event organised by a local cultural association. Participants walk (accompanied by a guide) from Passolanciano to Serramonacesca stopping at tasting points to sample honey, cheeses, traditional baked goodies, hearty peasant dishes, and wine. The walking trail runs through the Majella National Park and boasts breathtaking mountain views with hermitages and old shepherds’ stone huts. It is a very popular event and the number of participants is limited to 600, so book as soon as the event is announced. Participants can park in Serramonacesca and take a shuttle to the start of the trail in Passolanciano. Last year, tickets cost €30 per person, including all food and drinks, and sold out quickly.

While you’re there: Visit the 11th-century Abbey San Liberatore a Majella, one of the most important examples of Romanesque architecture in Abruzzo.



SAGRA DE J' NTREMÈ

When: mid-August

Where: Gagliano Aterno (AQ)

Additional information: The programme and dates will be available on the town's Facebook [page](#)



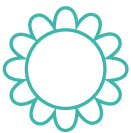
Now in its 16th year, annual food festival returns for three days of regional flavours, live music, and community celebrations. The highlight is *j'ntremè*, a local dish made from lamb innards in a sweet-and-sour sauce, based on a historic recipe from the Poor Clare nuns of the town's Santa Chiara Monastery. Prepared by the local association "*Com'è*," it's available throughout the event alongside pasta dishes, farro, and the ever-popular *arrosticini*. Each evening features live music and DJ sets in the village square.

RASSEGNA DEGLI OVINI

When: first week of August

Where: Campo Imperatore, località Fonte Macina

Additional information: The full programme will be published on the Gran Sasso Chamber of Commerce's [website](#) and their Facebook [page](#)



Thousands of visitors and... numerous flocks of sheep gather on the picturesque plateau of Campo Imperatore for the Rassegna degli Ovini. For over 60 years, this hugely popular event has been promoting the region's sheep farming. Farmers proudly showcase their ewes (up to 7000 animals are brought there for the occasion) and shepherd dogs with prizes given for the best flocks; dozens of artisans sell excellent local produce such as cheeses, honey, truffles, and saffron; *arrosticini* are grilled and wine is poured.

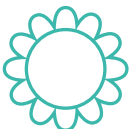
The show commences around 4pm on August 4, as flocks arrive at their designated fenced areas, accompanied by folk music and bagpipes.

SFILATA DEI PALMINTIERI

When: August 14

Where: Caramanico Terme (PE)

Additional information: The full programme will be available on this [page](#)



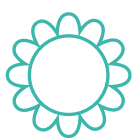
On the feast day of Santa Maria Assunta, locals parade in traditional costume along the main street of the village, carrying *palmentieri*, baskets filled with sweet waffles called *pizzelle*. The *palmentieri* are gifts from the community to the patron saint, and the proceeds from their sale are donated to support the patronal festival.

ANTICA FIERA DI SAN DONATO

When: August 7

Where: Castiglione Messer Raimondo (TE)

Additional information: The full programme of the celebrations will be published on the municipality's [page](#)



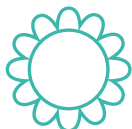
In Castiglione Messer Raimondo, the *Antica Fiera di San Donato* returns on 7 August in Contrada Piano San Donato, as part of the multi-day celebrations for San Donato Martire, the town's patron saint. Once one of twelve livestock and goods fairs that animated the area, it is now the only one to have survived, carrying traces of a rural trading tradition that once lasted three full days in early August. Today, the event blends religious observance with a lively public gathering, drawing pilgrims and visitors into the Valle del Fino for food stalls, crafts, and an atmosphere. The town once hosted twelve livestock and goods fairs, but only this one survives today, in a modernised form that still echoes its rural past.

IL PALIO DELLE PUPE

When: August 15

Where: Cappelle sul Tavo (PE)

Additional information: The full programme is published on the municipality's Facebook [page](#)



One of the oldest festivals in the province of Pescara, the Palio delle Pupe is a spectacular pyrotechnical event. It has been hosted in the town of Cappelle sul Tavo for almost 50 years, but the festival's roots go back to the times when fertility rites were celebrated with dances and fire. The town's fourteen neighbourhoods present their *pupe*, gigantic buxom papier-mâché puppet-dolls with firecrackers. The event starts in the afternoon with carts and floats parading through the streets of the town. As the evening falls, the *pupa* dances begin in the town's sports field in front of the spectators. Each doll has a man hidden inside who dances as the firecrackers and flares are set off.

At the end of the evening, the jury chooses the best pupa with the most spectacular firecracker display and announces the winning district. The festival carries on into the night with live music, food and drinks.

PECURE ALLU CUTTURE

When: first weekend of August

Where: Pacentro (AQ)

Additional information: The date for this year and details will be published on the ProLoco's [page](#)



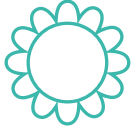
Now in its 19th year, the sagra puts an ancient shepherd's dish centre stage. *Pecura allu cutture* is a slow-cooked lamb stew – chunks of mutton simmered for hours in great copper cauldrons (*cuttore*) with potatoes, herbs and spices until it reaches a depth of flavour that no shortcut can replicate. Live music runs through the evenings, with arrosticini, local cheeses, zampanella and wine rounding out the spread.

LA RUZZOLA

When: mid-August

Where: Prezza (AQ)

Additional information: The dates of the games are announced on the town's ProLoco [page](#)



Every August in Prezza, locals take part in a traditional *ruzzola* competition. Players use a cord to launch a wooden disc – called a *ruzzola* – spinning down the quiet village streets. The goal is to cover a set distance in as few throws as possible. Teams are divided into men's, women's, and children's categories. It's a popular community event that keeps alive a rural game with ancient roots. While the event is not aimed at tourists, spectators are warmly welcomed. In the past – and still in some Abruzzese towns – a wheel of aged pecorino cheese was used as a *ruzzola*.

SAGRA DELLA PORCHETTA

When: end of August

Where: Lentella (CH)

Additional information: The date and full programme will be published on the ProLoco's Facebook [page](#)



Now in its 38th year, the *Sagra della Porchetta Lentellese* invites visitors to gorge on slow-roasted porchetta made from locally raised pigs, seasoned with a blend of spices and cooked for several hours to develop its rich, tender flavours. For several evenings, Piazza Garibaldi of Lentella will be filled with food stalls and communal tables for everyone to enjoy the *porchetta*, traditional local jam-filled biscuits, *celli ripieni*, made by village volunteers, and other traditional dishes while listening to live music.

FESTA DELLA FARA CIPOLLARA

When: first weekend of August

Where: Fara Filiorum Petri (CH)

Additional information: This year's dates and full programme will be published on the municipality's [page](#)



The festival celebrates the delicious flat white onion (*cipolla bianca di Fara Filiorum Petri*) in all its culinary forms – from soups to side dishes, main courses to preserves. The event begins with the traditional blessing of the onions, followed by a market featuring local producers where the *cipolla bianca* is the undisputed star. There are also culinary demonstrations, workshops, meetings with chefs, and numerous stands selling traditional dishes with the white onions.

VAL FINO AL CANTO

When: beginning of August

Where: Arsita (TE)

Additional information: If you are planning to stay in the village, make sure to book a room well in advance. A camping site will be set up for those who bring their own tent. The programme is published on the festival's Facebook [page](#)



This event, in the unlikely location of a small, picturesque village of Arsita in the Gran Sasso Mountains, attracts thousands of people and is often mentioned in the media as one Europe's top music festivals. It celebrates folk music from all over Italy and beyond. For four days, bands stroll or play in various locations around the village. Spectators are swept up by the flow of music and caught up in singing and dancing that go on through the night.

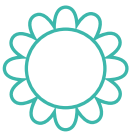
Come hungry and well rested – the festivities are combined with generous portions of the traditional *coatto* – a pastoral lamb stew in a tasty tomato sauce served with bread or potatoes – and can last until the wee hours of the morning.

LANCIO DEL PIATTO

When: August 15

Where: Castelli (TE)

Additional information: For more details see [Visit Castelli](#) or the municipality's [page](#)



Every Ferragosto, the town of Castelli hosts an event that is entirely its own. Participants hurl ceramic plates from the belvedere as far as they possibly can, the only real rule being to send them flying as far and as dramatically as possible. A great crash on landing is very much part of the point.

It is joyful, slightly absurd, and utterly charming – live music, spectacular views over the valley, the sound of smashing majolica and the crowd's cheers echoing across the mountains. The event starts at 4pm at the town's Belvedere.

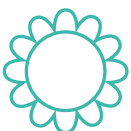
While you are there: Castelli is one of Abruzzo's most beautiful borghi and home to a ceramics tradition stretching back to the Renaissance. Visit the local ceramists workshops to admire their creations and buy unique gifts to take home.

LA FIERA DI SANT'EGIDIO IN LANCIANO

When: end of August

Where: Lanciano (CH)

Additional information: The full programme is published on the ProLoco Lanciano Facebook [page](#)



From afternoon until night, Piazza Plebiscito and Corso Trento e Trieste are filled with the chiming and jingling of bells. More than 100 vendors from across Italy come to Lanciano to sell thousands of handmade bells of all types as well as toys, kitchenware, and various gifts. The fair has ancient roots and is dedicated to Sant'Egidio, a Benedictine abbot, protector of the sick and lepers who lived in the 7-8th century. In the old days, they travelled with a bell tied to a stick to signal their approach. Over time, the bell became a symbol of love, exchanged by couples and friends, and a symbol of the city's long tradition of big fairs. The fair opens a three-week-long festive programme, *Feste di Settembre di Lanciano*, that brings concerts, book reading, and theatre performances to the town.



IL MASTROGIURATO (THE MEDIEVAL WEEK IN LANCIANO)

When: starts on the last Sunday of August

Where: Lanciano (CH)

Additional information: The festival's programme is published on the organisers' [website](#) and Facebook [page](#)



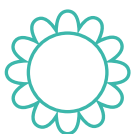
The week-long medieval festival in Lanciano celebrates the city's fairs and *mastrogiurato* (Master adjudicator) tradition, dating back to the 13th century. Originally appointed by Charles II of Anjou, the *mastrogiurato* maintained peace among traveling merchants who were trading at the big market in the city. The commercial competition was fierce, so the *mastrogiurato* carried a weapon and could arrest those who became too rowdy or aggressive. The festival features historical re-enactments, music, dancing, a medieval-style village market, food and wine stalls, and entertainment for all ages. The highlight is a grand parade (*il corteo storico*) with 500 locals dressed in historical costumes, accompanied by flag throwing, drums, trumpets, and another pageantry.

SAGRA DELLE CAMPANELLE DI SAN ROCCO

When: August 16

Where: Vasto (CH)

Additional information: The festival's details can be found on the municipality's Facebook [page](#)



Another traditional fair that celebrates bells is held in Vasto. It is dedicated to the saint who, struck by the plague, wandered the continent leaning on a stick with a bell to notify his presence. Being a pilgrim, San Rocco became a patron of wanderers and travellers. For this reason, back in the 1960s, the city's tourist board, decided to organise a festival celebrating the numerous tourists visiting the city of Vasto. Since then, every year, Piazza Rossetti hosts a large market of Abruzzo handicrafts with dozens of stalls selling bells in all sizes, colours, and materials. Their constant melodic jingling accompanies folk choirs' performances, traditional local dances, good food, and a great atmosphere.

SAGRA DEI CECI E DELLO ZAFFERANO A NAVELLI

When: the third weekend of August

Where: Navelli (AQ)

Additional information: ProLoco di Navelli who organises the festival posts the programme on their Facebook [page](#)



A celebration of what is considered by many to be the best saffron in the world grown in the plain below the picturesque town of Navelli. At this festival, you can sample dishes made with Navelli saffron, such as local chickpeas, *risotto*, pasta, and *suppli*. Additionally, you can see a traditional crafts exhibition showcasing wrought ironwork, lace, and embroidery, listen to live concerts and dance to traditional music. The event's highlight is the thrilling donkey races through the town. The race was born in 1980 as an irreverent imitation of the famous *Palio di Siena*, through the replacement of superb steeds with cute little donkeys whose task is to lead one of the eight districts to victory. The donkeys with riders run for two hundred metres, often changing direction, or refusing to continue to the laughter of the public. It is forbidden to use any form of violence to make the donkeys move. Once the winner is crowned, celebrations continue in the main square with entertainment and traditional dishes.

SAGRA DEGLI GNOCCHI OPIANI

When: end of August

Where: Opi (AQ)

Additional information: See the ProLoco's [page](#) for the dates and full programme



A much-loved summer tradition, this annual *sagra* draws thousands of visitors year after year for its handmade *gnocchi opiani*, prepared by local women following a traditional recipe. Organised by the town's ProLoco, the event brings together generations for a celebration of local food, wine, music, and community spirit. Evenings are filled with live performances and end with fireworks over the historic centre, all set against the backdrop of the Abruzzo National Park.

While you are there: arrive early to take a walk along the ArteParco trail to see contemporary art installations immersed in nature (see page 20). See our mini-guide to Opi in the April 2025 issue available [here](#).

LA MAGIA DELLA LUCE

When: mid-August

Where: Opi (AQ)

Additional information: The full programme will be published in July on the ProLoco's [page](#)

During this annual event, the town's streetlights are turned off, and the medieval historic centre is illuminated by 12,000 small lanterns. Hundreds of people gather for a romantic communal dinner in the main piazza, accompanied by live music. The programme also includes guided walks through the town's narrow streets and alleyways, along with tastings of local food and wine specialties.



SAGRA DEL PANE CASARECCIO

When: first week of August

Where: Penna Sant'Andrea (TE)

Additional information: The full programme will be available shortly on the organiser's [page](#)



The annual sagra takes place alongside the 48th edition of the International Folklore Festival, which brings together folk groups from across Italy and around the world. The programme includes traditional singing, dancing, concerts, and a lively parade of the folk groups in colourful costumes through the village streets. The food stands sell regional specialties, a variety of homemade breads and local delicacies.

SAGRA DEL PROSCIUTTO AND FESTIVAL OF THE DDU BBOTTE

When: second week of August

Where: Basciano (TE)

Additional information: The full programme and dates for this year will be published on the ProLoco's [page](#)



Held in the historic centre of Basciano since 1968, this is one of Abruzzo's oldest and most beloved summer events. Each year, Piazza Vittorio Emanuele becomes the setting for a lively celebration that combines local food with traditional music.

The star of the *sagra* is the region's prized prosciutto, served alongside a range of other local specialties. The event takes place alongside the Festival Abruzzese del Ddu Bbotte, dedicated to the traditional two-bass organetto, a symbol of Abruzzo's rural musical heritage. Each evening, folk groups animate the stands with live performances, making this a must-visit for anyone interested in the flavours and sounds of Abruzzo.

LE RUELLE DI LU PAESE

When: second week of August

Where: Scerni (CH)

Additional information: The full programme will be published on the municipality's [page](#)



During the two-day festival in Scerni's historic heart, local restaurateurs, agriturismi and associations serve traditional dishes along a route that winds through the town's stone-paved lanes, accompanied by wine and music. The dishes include slow-cooked lamb, pizza frita with ventricina sauce, mezzemaniche pasta with rich tomato and snail sauce, ravioli with ventricina and many more.

SAGRA DELLA VENTRICINA

When: mid-August

Where: Guilmi (CH)

Additional information: More details and this year's dates will be published on the organisers' [page](#)

Now in its 45th year, the Sagra della Ventricina is a beloved annual event in the hilltop town of Guilmi. Visitors can sample the town's signature *ventricina* – an elongated cured meat, sliced like salami and served with the rich, amber-hued *vino cotto* produced in the area. The menu also features dishes such as pasta dressed with *ventricina* sauce and traditional Guilmesse baked goodies. Live music completes the festive atmosphere.



SAGRA DEI CAVATELLI CON LA SALSICCIA

When: mid-August

Where: Tufillo (CH)

Additional information: The full programme and dates for this year will be published on the ProLoco's [page](#)

Held annually in Tufillo's Piazza Fuori Porta, the sagra celebrates a simple local dish: small handmade cavatelli pasta served with a hearty tomato and homemade sausage sauce. Now in its 38th edition, the festival is organised by the local Pro Loco and features food stalls opening at 8 pm. Live music and a DJ set provide a lively soundtrack to the evening.



SAGRA DEL VINO

When: August 7-8

Where: Vittorito (AQ)

Additional information: The full programme will be published on the ProLoco's [page](#)

Now in its 27th year, Vittorito's Wine Festival celebrates the town's centuries-old winemaking tradition, with nearly every family owning a vineyard. During the three-day event, visitors can sample wines from the Valle Peligna region, where winemaking has been practised since Roman times, and enjoy a variety of local and regional specialties at food stands open each evening from 8pm. Live music fills the air, setting the tone for warm festive nights.



FESTIVAL DEL PEPERONCINO PICCANTE

When: second week of August

Where: Filetto (CH)

Additional information: The details will be published on the organisers' [page](#).



The Filetto Chilli Pepper Festival is an annual August event celebrating the region's iconic spicy chilli, a staple of local cuisine. The festival fills the town's streets and squares with food stalls selling both traditional and international spicy dishes, flavoured pecorino and goat cheeses, peppery cured meats, and a variety of dishes including pasta, vegetables, meats.

SAGRA DELLA SCRIPPELLA

When: second week of August

Where: Elice (PE)

Additional information: Keep an eye on the festival organisers' [page](#) for this year's dates



Celebrated since 1990, this sagra is dedicated to the humble scrippella, a fried pizza, (in other parts of Abruzzo it is called pizza frita, frittella or pizzonta). Elice goes all out and offers scrippella of every type – stuffed with sausage, prosciutto, and vegetables. Other typical Abruzzese foods such as gnocchi with truffles, arrosticini, and porchetta are also available. There is live music, a small artisan market, and plenty of cheer.

Festivals dedicated to fried pizza (*Sagra della pizza frita*) are also celebrated in Colledara, Francavilla al Mare and Turrialignani in July.

SAGRA DELLA CAPRA ALLA NERETESE

When: 3rd week of August over six evenings

Where: Nereto (TE)

Additional information: . The full programme and dates for this year will be announced on the organisers' [page](#)

One of Abruzzo's most celebrated traditional dishes gets its own festival. Capra alla Neretese is a slow-cooked goat stew with a recipe passed down through generations – recognised as a traditional agri-food product by the Abruzzo Region, and popular enough to have earned its own page on *Giallozafferano*, Italy's most popular food website.

The menu centres on what you came for: pappardelle with a rich goat meat sauce, a generous main of capra alla Neretese, a charcuterie and cheese plate as an alternative for the uninitiated. All made with fresh, local ingredients. If the weather turns, the event moves indoors.

MOSTRA MERCATO DEL TARTUFO

When: August 23-24

Where: Quadri (CH)

Additional information: The date and full programme will be available on the event's Facebook [page](#)



Now in its 21st year, the Mostra Mercato del Tartufo returns to Quadri, a small town renowned for its quality truffles that earned it official title of Città del Tartufo. The event brings together regional food, wine, crafts and music. Alongside stalls offering fresh truffles, visitors can taste and buy cheeses, cured meats, honeys, preserves and traditional baked goodies. Local artisans will display their work in wood, ceramics and jewellery, creating live on site.

A team of chefs will prepare a truffle-themed menu served both at lunch and dinner, featuring truffle bruschetta, two pasta dishes, a main course with a side, and wine. Among the most anticipated moments is the truffle dog competition, where expert hunting dogs show off their sharp instincts in a friendly, open-air contest.

SAGRA DEGLI GNOCCHI

When: end of August

Where: Sant'Egidio alla Vibrata (TE)

Additional information: The full programme and upcoming dates will be published on the ProLoco's [page](#)



Held annually in Sant'Egidio alla Vibrata, the Sagra degli Gnocchi is a long-standing summer festival now in its 30th edition. The event brings together residents and visitors with generous portions of handmade gnocchi, traditional fritters, arrosticini, and other hearty dishes. Alongside the food, evenings are animated by live music and entertainment for all ages.

GIRONI DIVINI

When: end of August

Where: Tagliacozzo (AQ)

Additional information: For this year's dates and details see the event's [page](#)



Three evenings dedicated to Abruzzo's finest wines. From 8 pm each night, you can participate in open wine degustation featuring a curated selection of local wines, organised by grape variety and category. Two blind tastings per evening offer guests a chance to sample wines in competition and contribute to the selection of the public's favourite. Last year, tickets cost €20 per person and include unlimited tastings.

SAGRA DELLA PATATA

When: first week of August

Where: Avezzano (AQ)

Additional information:

Announcements and the full programme are published on the municipality's [page](#)



Since 1971, Avezzano has celebrated its famous *patate del Fucino*. The festival attracts large crowds to Piazza Borgo Via Nuova. The menu is devoted entirely to local specialities from the Fucino area, with the potato as the undisputed star – *gnocchi*, potato soup, potato pizza, chips, sweet potato fritters, and more.

To learn more about the Fucino potato read our article on page 20.

SAGRA DELLA PAPPARDELLA AL SUGO DI PAPERA

When: end of August

Where: Cermignano (TE)

Additional information: See this year's dates and the full programme on the organisers' [page](#)



The five-day festival celebrates one of Abruzzo's most beloved dishes: pappardelle pasta dressed in a rich duck *ragù*, simmered slowly as local grandmothers once did. Each evening from 7:00 p.m., food and drinks stands offer generous servings of pappardelle, fritters, sausage sandwiches, and *arrosticini*.

SAGRA DELLA TRIGLIA E DEL PESCE FRITTO

When: first week of August

Where: Villa San Nicola a Ortona (CH)

Additional information: The dates for this year will be announced on the ProLoco [page](#)



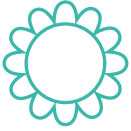
The *Sagra della Triglia e del Pesce Fritto*, awarded the national "Sagra di Qualità" recognition for its authenticity and promotion of local food traditions, celebrates Abruzzo's coastal cooking through generous plates of fried red mullet, mixed seafood, and other Adriatic specialities prepared by the local Pro Loco. Alongside the fish stands, visitors will also find *arrosticini*, live music, and open-air dancing that carry the festival late into the evening.

CECI DELLA SPOSA

When: first week of August

Where: Pescasseroli (AQ)

Additional information: Keep an eye on the organisers' Facebook [page](#) for this year's date and programme announcement



This little-known festival brings back an old tradition of so-called "bride's chickpeas" (*ceci della sposa*) which is still alive in Pescasseroli. It is a family celebration, with the bride and groom's families, neighbours, close friends, and the group of elderly women experts (known as *ceciare*) getting together to prepare the chickpeas as a symbol of fertility and abundance. The event consists of a demonstration of the preparation of *ceci* (always accompanied by singing) followed by a tasting, an exhibition of antique hand-embroidered linens, and a small vintage wedding dress show.

While you are there: take a short drive to the Barrea Lake for a refreshing swim or visit the wolf sanctuary in Civitella Alfedena to observe these magnificent animals in a semi-wild state.

SAGRA FREGNACCE E DEGLI ARROSTICINI

When: end of August

Where: Cermignano (TE)

Additional information: Keep an eye on the organisers' Facebook [page](#) for this year's date and programme announcement



The Sagra brings together some of the most beloved flavours of the Teramo province in a feast that stretches late into warm summer evenings. Now in its 19th edition, the festival celebrates handmade fregnacce – rustic ribbons of pasta dressed with local sauces – alongside smoky arrosticini, fritters, fried cheese, and other specialities from the surrounding towns. As music drifts through the piazza and long tables fill with hungry visitors, food stands open from around 7pm.

ATRI A TAVOLA

When: August 12-13

Where: Atri (TE)

Additional information: The dates and the full programme will be announced in the coming weeks on the festival's [page](#)



One of Abruzzo's biggest food festivals, Atri a Tavola showcases the excellence of Abruzzo's cuisine and culinary traditions. In the town's centre, 50 local producers will set up stalls selling their best products: wines, cheeses, cured meats, truffles, saffron, pasta, jams, honey, and liqueurs offering free tastings. In Piazza Duomo, concerts, workshops, and cooking shows will be hosted every evening, while in Piazza Duchi D'Acquaviva, food trucks from all over Italy will be selling street food. This festival is one of the best in Abruzzo for the quality of food sold with some gourmet dishes created specifically for this event (Hadria sour cocktail, a panino sandwich with local saffron, etc.). Bus shuttles will be running to take visitors from the car park near the Atri hospital to the town centre.

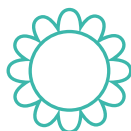
While you're there: Visit Il Duomo di Atri to see its magnificent frescoes.

ARTI E MESTIERI A PALAZZO

When: Second week of August

Where: Castelvecchio Subequo (AQ)

Additional information: This year's dates will be announced on the event's [page](#)



The 14th edition of *Arti e Mestieri a Palazzo – Castelvecchio DiVino in Vino* turns historic palaces and old wine cellars into a three-day route dedicated to wine and old trades. Beginning each evening from 6pm in Piazza San Francesco, the festival brings together ten wineries offering guided tastings with sommeliers from the Italian Sommelier Association of Abruzzo. Alongside the wine programme, visitors can explore exhibitions by local artists and artisans, as well as demonstrations of traditional trades that reconnect the event to the working life of the village. Beyond the tastings, the festival takes visitors to Castelvecchio's forgotten winemaking past through historic cellars inside noble residences and the remarkable barrel hall of Palazzo Pirro, where enormous wooden casks from a once-thriving 19th-century wine trade still survive intact. Visitors can purchase a tasting ticket including a glass, bag, and five tastings selected from twenty wines. There will be food stands and live music.

SAGRA DEI DOLCI TIPICI LOCALI

When: end of August

Where: Mozzagrogna (CH)

Additional information: Keep an eye on the event's [page](#) for this year's dates

Now in its 40th edition, this sagra in the hilltop hamlet of Villa Romagnoli (Mozzagrogna) celebrates the region's sweeter side with classic baked goodies such as ferratelle, bocconotti, fiadoni, pesche, tarallucci, and mostaccioli. A highlight of the evening is the competition for the best locally baked bocconotto, judged among residents and home bakers. Alongside the desserts, visitors can also find savoury Abruzzese staples including pallotte cace e ove, arrosticini, pizza, wine, and beer, with live music carrying the festival into the night.



SAGRA DELLA PATATA

When: end of August

Where: Barisciano (AQ)

Additional information: The full programme will be published on the festivals' [page](#)



The *Sagra della Patata* in Barisciano is a historic food festival dedicated to celebrating the region's traditional potato varieties and their cultural importance. Established in 1980, the event honours the role of the potato as a staple and vital source of sustenance for the local farming community. You can taste a range of classic potato-based dishes, including gluten-free options, such as gnocchi with sausage, pecora alla cottora with potatoes, potatoes with salt cod, and potato zeppole. The festival is complemented by live music and a market showcasing local crafts and produce.

ENOTIRINO WINE FESTIVAL

When: end of August

Where: Bussi dul Tirino (PE)

Additional information: This year's date will be announced shortly on the Enotirino [website](#)



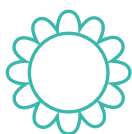
Enotirino 2026 is dedicated to wine lovers interested in exploring local producers and learning about the stories behind each label. You can taste wines while speaking directly with the producers, meet local food artisans and sample their products, including cheeses, cured meats, rustic bread, and hot dishes to complement the wine tastings. The event will be held in the beautiful, recently-renovated Castello di Bussi with panoramic views of the surrounding valley, particularly striking at sunset. Last year tickets cost €25 at the door (for unlimited tastings).

LA PERDONANZA

When: end of August

Where: L'Aquila

Additional information: For details, go to the [website](#) and the event's [page](#)



Since 1294, the city of L'Aquila has been celebrating La Perdonanza (The Celestinian Forgiveness). Anyone who enters the Basilica di Santa Maria di Collemaggio between August 28 and 29 is granted plenary indulgence. A week-long programme of celebrations includes religious services, opening of the Holy Door, classical music concerts, and a procession carrying the historic 13th-century document, Bolla del Perdono, signed by Celestine V. The Celestinian Forgiveness celebration has recently been declared an intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO.

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