Trevignano Lake Bracciano-Treasure on your Doorstep

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Letter of thanks from the Comune di Finale Emilia

**Gradmas & Grandpas** 

La Promessa

**Ancient Town of Sutri-Sutrium Ire** 

**SEPTEMBER 2012** 



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gazette		

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## **Trevignano Lake Bracciano – Treasure on your Doorstep**

by Jean Backhouse & Peter Steele

Trevignano is a beautiful small town on the shores of Lake Bracciano just north of Rome. It is well known for its mediaeval town centre and dominant church overlooking the lake. The township has many picturesque cafes and restaurants located around the main piazze and alongside the lake. This is where to take time out of a week-end or during the summer; to enjoy a glass of local wine and appreciate the joys of small-town Italy.



<u>Beach Trevignano</u>. For the majority family visitors with small kids, Trevignano means beach, lakeside and water in summer. Beat the crowds and arrive early and leave early.

#### A place of which to dream

Imagine a picturesque township on the northern shores of Lake Bracciano 50-60 kilometres north of Rome perched on a small cliff at the end of a bay, and with the shimmering hills of northern Lazio stretching east-west across the horizon. The delightful small mediaeval centre remains, but has long given way to the modern township with its new housing developments – many of them retirement and holiday homes – streets of small shops and lakeside restaurants, beaches and parking areas. The town has grown back into the hills in recent times and stretches for more than three kilometres alongside the lakeshore towards Bracciano town.

The veneer of modern housing and the large contingent of foreign residents, however, add value to what is quintessential a small Italian community that has come to terms with the modern world. More than most rural communities just an hour or so from the capital city, Trevignano has retained its vitality, sense of purpose and hospitality, and reflects much that can be appreciated in modern-day Europe.

The original hamlet of Trevignano is easily identified around the site of the ruined castle to the east of the modern township, and





<u>Centro Storico Trevignano</u>. Old town meets new town with the gateway to the centro-storico at right centre (and topped with tower and bell), but reflecting the demands of the modern Trevignanese with pavement cafes and restaurants that spread out wherever there is sufficient space.

visitors and residents alike continue to enjoy the atmosphere of steep narrow passageways, the vista of the lake from upper story windows and the sense of history that comes from wandering the mediaeval centro-storico. Only the handful of parked cars and motorscooters, a glimpse of a modern interior, the clothes the people are wearing or a phrase or two caught from those walking past remind you of the present day.

That many of the residents are part-timers, with holiday homes scattered throughout the centro-storico simply exemplifies the movement of people in modern-day Italy – with the old out and the new in. The renovation of the paintwork and masonry of much of the original exterior provides scant reflection of the modernization of the interior of the houses and apartments. Similar but typically more isolated townships across the country continue to decline as rural populations fall and property is not modernized. Trevignano is fortunate with its proximity to Rome and its lakeside location.

#### Northern Lazio is on the doorstep

Trevignano is an ideal place from which to visit the region. A large number of interesting places - most of them with easily identifiable Etruscan heritage - are located within an easy drive from the township. This includes Rome, Cerveteri (30 km). Bracciano (12 km), Sutri (12 km), Viterbo (45 km), Tarquinia (61 km), Tuscania (52 km), Caprarola (25 km) and Tolfa (15 km). Get out of the car and lace on those hiking boots and you can, quite literally, have the countryside to yourself. The national reserve/country park at Monterano, for example, is just 30 minutes away by car mediaeval ruined village (but now renovated), volcanic bubbling springs, Devil's Bridge and more; great walking.

#### Lake Bracciano

Trevignano is one of three towns spaced equidistance around the shores of Lake Bracciano. The lake is roughly circular with a diameter of about 9 kilometres and, at centre, 170 metres deep. Care with disposal of urban wastes and sewage in the towns and townships bordering the lake and strict control of the use of agricultural chemicals in surrounding farmlands have resulted in crystal clear uncontaminated water. At times of shortage, the lake is a source of domestic water for Rome. Of an afternoon the winds get up on the lake and blow south-north into Trevignano; this is the time to learn how to control a small sail boat or windsurfer.

During the winter the resident population is about 3,000, but this doubles during the summer months with many of the incoming visitors foreigners and principally journalists, painters, teachers or simply people who chose to holiday on one of the most benign of Italy's

(continued on page 8)









<u>Trevignano Township</u>. Like many other ancient communities in Italy, the original people located themselves on an-easy-to-defend peninsular adjacent to a river; lake or shore line.

central lakes and just an hour or so from Rome. It is sometimes said that the village has more than 100 different nationalities among its summer residents.

#### **Distant beginnings**

There have been settlements at Trevignano since 600 BC (and probably earlier too) with the original population made up of pastoralists, farmers, fisherfolk and those who serviced them. The area is rich in history as exemplified by the Etruscan tombs and artefacts – with significant findings from the 1990s – that continue to be discovered. Subsequent occupants of the area are thought to have come from the Middle East, for example, from the lands that now contain modern-day Turkey and Libya; the ancient peoples of the region were not as homogenous as Etruscan history sometimes suggests.

#### Local rivalries

Extending his power within the Provence of Rome, Pope Innocent III instructed a 'rocca' to be built at Trevignano in 1198. Comprising a castle on the heights and two concentric walls that enclosed the township and stretched down to the shoreline, the rocca played a pivotal role in the struggle for supremacy between key neighbouring families during the middle ages.

In 1380 the castle and its immediate territory became the property of the Orsini Family. The struggle for supremacy between the Orsini and Borgia Families in the region reached a climax in 1496 when the castle and the township came under siege by the Borgia Family (fronting for Pope Alexander VI). Borgia artillery bombarded the township, and the Trevignanese subsequently joined forces with the Orsini and Bracciano armies. The combined forces were sufficient to repel the siege army, including the interception and destruction of two small ships that were being transported along the Via Cassia by the Borgia Family, which would have enabled the siege to be broken with direct attack from the lake.

Having failed to take the small fortified township of Trevignano, the besieging Borgia army at the more heavily fortified Bracciono castle began to lose heart and were eventually routed by the combined anti-Borgia forces and forced to flee.

Unfortunately, the castle was severely damaged and, to this day, has remained more



or less in an abandoned state. A small pathway that starts from the Church of S. Maria Assunta leads through narrow lanes overhung by houses up to the heights of the ruins. From here the beauty of the lake and distant hills can be appreciated. This is little more than an easy 10 minute walk, and a great place to sit and enjoy a picnic in the shade of a wall or tree.

#### **Original spa country**

The numerous hot springs in the locality exemplify the volcanic origin of the lake and surrounding lands. These were popular with the original communities that lived in the area, and with the ancient armies that were once stationed in and around the lake, while waiting to enter Rome. Over the years, many of these springs have been developed for their therapeutic value as spa, and many have remained in private hands and are not accessible to the public.

A noted example were the hot springs at Vicarello which were owned as a retreat by a German order of nuns and were popular with local families during the time of the Second World War. Rumour also has it that ancient artefacts were once discovered there. The pools were closed during the 1980s and have subsequently remained in private hands.

#### Trevignano Museum

The museum is housed in the Town Hall which is located in the main piazza in the centrostorico and facing the lake. It contains many of the artefacts and findings from local burial chambers including the huge necropolis that stretches over three kilometres across hill country north of the modern township (trace remains of the ancient Etruscan city of Sabate).

Among the funeral furnishings on display are bucchero and impasto pottery, bronze vases, cauldrons, buckles and studs and ornaments made of gold and amber. A large finely decorated bronze fan and two large and elegantly painted eastern-style amphorae are on display from findings from the Annesi-Piacentini and Flabelli tombs discovered intact in 1995. Not to be missed are the tomb of the Etruscan warrior of the Eighth century BC (still set in its original block of earth) and the remains of two vehicles – a chariot and a cart.

#### **Celebrating Trevignano**

Although Trevignano has many musical and



<u>Lake Bracciano ferry boat</u>. And is beach life if not your passion, take a boat ride across the lake and visit the three main centres in a single afternoon – Bracciano, Trevignano and Anguillara.





<u>Lake Bracciano</u>. View from the derelict castle looking south over the centro-storico with the dominant Santa Maria Assunta church at centre; a vision to be cherished.

theatrical festivities during the summer months which take place in the centro-storico, the main piazza, on the lake boat and at various bars, the highlight of the year is 15 August - Assumption Day. This attracts many visitors to see the blessing of the Patron Saint Maria transported by boat to the church, and to see the flotilla of small boats which follow the lake boat to enjoy its resident players and their opera music. The climax of the evening is always a firework display.

Motor boats are restricted but the lake is a playground for sailing, canoeing and windsurfing. During the summer months and particularly at weekends, the waters are popular with families – sunbathing, swimming and snorkelling, with groups of adults and kids riding the paddle boats for use as diving platforms along the beach front of Trevignano.

Because of the impact of the lake, Trevignano enjoys a temperate climate without extremes of temperature. It rarely falls below freezing in winter which enables the more popular tropical plants, citrus fruit trees and bougainvillea to flourish. In summer, day-time temperatures typically range 25-30 degC and coincide with the driest period of the year when rainfall is <40 mm/month. Winter rains are normally three times as high.

#### What are you waiting for?

Sure you may have already been to Trevignano and you may know the township well but, ask yourself: 'how long ago was that?' Summer 2012 would be a very good time to re-acquaint yourself with the delights of this most enchanting small town And, if summer is too hot or you prefer a quieter time of the year without the tourists, then go in late autumn when the leaves in the surrounding forests are turning brown, and the winds of an evening require you to wear that cardigan or jacket – but the majority restaurants continue to remain open. Whatever - now is a very good time to consider a visit





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# **Exploring creative options?**

### by Ivy Steele

Everyday Rome bombards us with a kaleidoscope of historical, cultural and artistic images, whilst the roman way of life brings a multitude of life experiences flashing before our eyes. Many of us rush around, camera in hand, trying to capture the moment: amazing sights and exciting cameos filled with light and colour which overwhelm our senses, stimulate our thoughts and enrich our imagination. A wander around the central city streets, a meander through an art gallery or museum or just the leisure to sit in a café and watch the world go by, inspires our creativity and kindles ideas on many levels.

Perhaps you enjoy composing and creating your unique photos as your eye captures the unusual or the beautiful moments which claim your attention. But have you ever thought of extending those ideas and images further, to express your feelings about them more directly, by creating something which more clearly illustrates **your own unique way of seeing** them?

As a newcomer, perhaps you are already experiencing a vague feeling of restlessness accompanied by a wish to look for further ways to express yourself or your new environment. Or perhaps you have lived in Rome for many years and now find you have time on your hands or a desire to express your feelings (be they love or hate) about the eternal city or your life and environment in general?

The FAO Artist group may offer an opportunity for a form of self-expression which until now you had not considered; an opportunity for you to develop your thoughts and feelings into something more tangible? Perhaps you would simply like to be able to paint a picture of the Coliseum or one of those beautiful umbrella pine trees. Or maybe you are already an artist and would like to extend your skills and join other like-minded people to paint for a few hours.



Artist Group members enjoy a painting class in the FAO Art Room

You may not be aware that there is a dedicated Art Room at FAO, situated in the basement of building E where FAO current and retired staff and their family members may attend regular art classes each week.

There are two teachers available with a range of teaching skills which include, painting in oils, water colour, acrylic and pastel and of course drawing instruction, should you wish to have help in this area too. There are also opportunities for life drawing and painting and for portraiture. In the summer months, teachers can also accompany a group of students to paint "alla prima" at various locations around the city or in the surrounding countryside



There is a misconception that art work requires some hidden talent or dedicated skill. But, I firmly believe that anyone and everyone is capable of producing meaningful art work whatever their artistic background, or lack of it, for I began to paint 15 years ago with absolutely no artistic experience of any kind!

The well-known saying "Beauty is in the eye of the beholder" applies here. Each of us **sees** differently -10 people painting the same object or landscape will produce 10 very different paintings...and these in turn will appeal individually to a range of people with a similar variety of artistic preferences.

Art work is about showing the world how you see it as an individual and it does not really matter what anyone else thinks about it anyway. You do not even have to show it to anyone else if you do not want to.

But within a few months I am sure you will be happy to exhibit your work alongside other students in the FAO Artist Group shows which are held in the CASA bar. And who knows, perhaps very soon you will also be holding your own exhibition there too. All members of the Artist Group may book this space to exhibit their art work if they so desire.

So if you are hovering on the edge of exploring your own artistic potential do not hesitate to make the most of the opportunities offered here within FAO. Visit the Art Room to learn more. New students are always welcome and may take advantage of a free lesson using the art materials already available in the art room, before committing themselves to future lessons and the purchase of their own art materials.



Members of the Artist Group paint in an FAO Art Class

For further information on instruction and classes, please call one of the two teachers listed here below

**Bob Dickerson - Phone.** Cell 340 341 5028, Home 06 769 66961 Classes - Monday - any 3 hour period between 10:30 am and 7 pm. Thursday - any 3 hour period between 10:30 am and 7 pm.

Marina Hass - Phone 06 785 1623 Classes - Tuesday evening - 5pm-7pm. Wednesday mornings - 10am -1 pm.

**FAO Art Room Phone - Extension (only during classes) - (06 570) 54257** You will also need to become a member of the FAO Staff Coop. Regular Art Classes resume on September 15th and usually take place at the times shown above but PLEASE CALL THE TEACHERS TO CONFIRM CLASS TIMES AS THESE MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

We would not like you to be disappointed!!



### Islands and the Tranquillity of Isola Maggiore in Lake Trasimeno

#### by Peter Steele

Islands have always stimulated the imagination; the source of cultures, legends and dreams, and with this has come a sense of isolation, adventure and perfection even with, perhaps, that underlying hint of danger. For others the separation provided by a stretch of water may provide a haven of sorts with the security that comes from living in a 'known world'.

In shore islands and those found in lakes are usually more familiar; and, in a modern world, provide for novel and interesting tourist industries – in other words - a great day out for the family. And, if you haven't already done so - this is where you introduce yourself to Isola Maggiore the second largest island in Lake Trasimeno.



<u>Welcome sign.</u> A boat ride on Lake Trasimeno was a welcome break from the traditional hill-top towns and villages of Umbria – with overcrowded tourist facilities, competition for parking and steep hills that have to be negotiated; welcome indeed.

#### **Romanticizing islands**

A combination of the Holy Roman Empire and German technologies (meaning theadaptation of the screw press to take moveable type – metal, robust and highly accurate – and the mass production of print pages) from the Fifteenth century on shifted books into everyday use. Well, it took >200 years before they filtered out of the ecclesiastical and/or political world of the time – often the same thing - and into the hands of the 'man in the street': on the basis of improved literacy of the majority people. As reading became more popular so more people wrote for pleasure

reading; and islands frequently featured in their stories. The four books, for example, that make-up 'Gulliver's Travels' written by Jonathon Swift date from the early Eighteenth century. They describe islands, respectively, inhabited by tiny people (<15 cm), by giants (>22 m) and by horses. There is even a 'flying island' in one book.

Space, time and resourcefulness feature whenever people are marooned or shipwrecked on an uninhabited island. People ask themselves – how would they manage? Just about the most famous book of this genre





<u>Ferry boat</u>. Sailing on silk – prevailing winds, sheltered seating on the top deck and the world's best scenery slowly gliding past.

is 'Robinson Crusoe' written by Daniel Defoe also in the early Eighteenth century. A fictional account of a castaway living 28 years on a remote island in the Caribbean – probably based on real-life Tobago - and, equally probably, linked to the four years that the Scotsman Alexander Selkirk spent on a remote Chilean island in the East Pacific.

#### **Resourceful people**

The success of the Defoe book was staggering and captured the imagination of people throughout the developed world of the time – and has continued to do so to the present day. The original and copycat stories continue to be promoted in books, television and movies. Think 'Swiss Family Robinson', 'Castaway', 'The Beach, 'Island of Adventure,' 'Treasure Island' and others. The stories from Swift and Defoe provided a reflection on the socioeconomic status of their times, with underlying messages that could imply, reflect and criticize, but much of popular island writing since has simply entertained.

An 'Island to Oneself' provides a recent autobiographical island story as written by New Zealander Tom Neale and based on the 16 years that he voluntarily spent by himself on Anchorage Island in the Surrawo Atoll part of the Cook Islands during the period 1952-1977. Neal introduces the isolated and sometimes dangerous life of the 'Coastwatchers' – the odd-ball collection of >400 mainly Australian and New Zealand military intelligence people posted to islands throughout the SW Pacific and in the path of the expanding Japanese navy during World War II; to establish local teams and to report movements of ships and aircraft. Lonely, boring and hazardous work, but ultimately crucial in the battle of Guadalcanal that stopped the Japanese taking Australia.

#### Islands in context; exploration

Islands have long been the cradle of biological change as species have developed that varied from their neighbours – sometimes located only a short distance away. Much the same change can be seen in the cultures of the people that have inhabited islands typically separated by great distances from larger population centres – originally unknown and only discovered in relatively recent times from the exploratory seamanship of the earlier traders, merchant adventurers and colonial emissaries; and advances in the marine technologies of those times. As the ships became more powerful and reliable so people ventured across ever wider expanses of sea.

By the late Eighteenth century the known seaboard world is much as we know it today – and this was achieved largely on the basis of wind-power - with the islands that were discovered and claimed (never mind the





<u>Downtown Port Village</u>. Via Guglielmi in all its reconstructed glory – the domain of the foot walker and the push bike. The traditional community has never been entirely lost, but modern day livelihoods are dependent upon the tourist euro.

indigenous population that may already have been there) remaining the domain of the occupier. And, therein, the basis for wars between the prevailing world powers of the time - wars and political disorder that continue into the present time with sometimes hard dialogue between the ex-colonial empires, remnants of their expatriate communities and the populations that have developed from those left behind from those earlier times. And it is not enough that issues of this kind may have ceased. Access to islands, atolls - rocks even - can still give rise to greed, claim and counter-claim as neighbouring countries compete for marine resources - as recently exemplified by the islands of the South China Sea - with the inherent risk of modern warfare spilling over into regional conflict.

The prevailing sea winds remain important for shipping, but it is the airplane that now connects these outlying and sometimes distant islands notwithstanding the fragility of ever declining populations in the more isolated places. There are few isolated islands that remain without contact by air – but they exist; consider Saint Helena, Tristan de Cunha and Pitcairn.

# Competition for resources – making a living

Visions of islands then have come to depend largely upon those with the inclination, time and resources with which to project themselves into the sometimes mythical historical world that this sense of isolation provides. This is very much a contemporary view, however, for the reality of those earlier times suggests a world of intertribal/clan/family rivalry, the competition for ever diminishing resources, increasing populations and the destruction of essential socio-economic infrastructure - leading to collapse. Easter Island is a classic case discovered as a largely empty island by the first European visitors in the late Seventeenth century with an indigenous population estimated at <2,000, but augmented with >850 giant stone statues - suggesting an earlier population of >15,000.

#### (continued on page 18)



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#### (continued from page 16)

Lace making. Introduced just on 100 years ago to provide livelihoods for island girls, the industry has continued into the modern day with a tourist focus. The museum had elegant (and expensive) wedding and christening dresses displayed.



Wherever they are to be found, most islands are no longer isolated from the nearest mainland or neighbouring islands and, adapting to the constraints of people making a living in the modern world, many have turned to tourism – capturing the sense of romance and adventure of those prepared to visit them, but who would probably never think of living there. For the early Twenty-first century this is reflected in the realm of the cruise boat and particularly where there are groups of neighbouring islands or where these islands link easily into a major sea port and the comfortable schedule available from steaming overnight – waking up in the morning in a new port, island or country (or all three).

#### **Enter Isola Maggiore**

Travel to Isola Maggiore in Lake Trasimeno and there is a microcosm of this tourist industry, except you catch the hourly ferry from Castiglione del Lago, purchase a seven euro return ticket and enjoy the tranquillity of a 30 - minute run on the MV Perugia – great views across the lake to the low rolling hills, the aquatic birds – gulls, ducks, herons and cormorants – that fill the surface of the lake and, respectively, leaving Castiglione or arriving at Isola Maggiore the dominance on the skyline of the ramparts of the medieval fortress and the towers and crenulated roofline of the ex-convent of Villa Guglielmi with the remains of a windmill on the lake shore. This is where the camera fraternity shift into top gear.

Tourism is a feature in all the communities of Lake Trasimeno following the decline of fisheries and the mechanization of local agriculture. Socio-economic and demographic change has opened new opportunities for people everywhere and not least in rural Italy; and people have shifted from the demanding labour-intensive work required of earlier times into modern service-based activities, and with many people moving away.



#### Fishing used to dominate

In its heyday in the late Sixteenth century the supremacy of the lake fishing industry and its base on Isola Maggiore supported a population of the order >500 people, but this declined during the ensuing 500 years as a result of fluctuations in the height of the lake surface, the inundation of housing in the port village community and elsewhere around the coastline and, crucially, the demise of the 'tori' fishing systems that became impractical as the level of the lake rose.

Visit the small but well-documented museum describing island life during >2,000 years of development and you can catch glimpses of the impact of changing water levels on the people and their industry. The medieval port complex which dominated fishing and transport during the Eleventh-Twelth century became lost under >4 metres of water from the Sixteenth century on, and the extent and complexity of its construction only became recognized and documented during the early Twentieth century as it once again became visible following the improved management of the lake that resulted from late Nineteenth century investment in new outflow structures.

Lake control was largely beyond the capabilities of earlier communities and this notwithstanding the importance of the lake and its fishing industries for >1,000 years and principally from the early middle ages on. Small settlements have been found that testify to >4,000 years of continuous habitation from the Bronze age through the Etrusco-Roman period, followed by the virtual decline of rural communities across Central Italy given the demise of the Roman Empire and invasions from the north, until the ascendency of a handful of powerful agro-trading families in the Middle Ages centred upon Perugia led to re-population. The lake became (and remains) an integral part of the greater Perugia economic sphere, and the investment in fishing that followed has sustained an industry that still provides of the order 30 percent of freshwater fish caught nationally.

#### Isola Maggiore on foot

But you only get a feel for this kind of historical background from time spent wandering the back trails of the island and reading the many placards, notices and information boards thoughtfully provided by the municipality (and the Umbria Regional Agency for Tourism). The island is small – it



<u>Villa Guglielmi.</u> First glimpses of Isola Maggiore from the ferry – the villa constructed for the Guigliemli Family around the Franciscan church and convent.



covers just 18 hectares – with a footpath around the coastline that is little more than 2 km. Most visitors take the cross-island footpaths, following the sign boards and keeping to the shade of the oaks, chestnuts, limes, pines and ancient olives that cover the island. The countryside is squeaky-clean and with all the right kinds of environmentallysensitive messages with which to encourage responsible visitors; they are a tribute to local services – you can see where new vegetation has been planted and pathways repaired.

This is summer-country and you follow a few of the same people across the island with whom you shared the ferryboat – taking in the spectacular views and visiting some key religious structures. Saint Francis visited the island, and the Franciscan Brothers followed 100 years later and established a church with convent that eventually became the Villa Guglielmi that dominates the skyline to the south of the island. The majority of visitors, however, take a walk in the port village, a leisurely lunch with a bottle of local wine overlooking the lake, and rarely venture 'upcountry' before return of the ferry.

renovated port village centred upon the one remaining thoroughfare - Via Guglielmi that attracts; brick paved and lined on either side by substantial houses of all shapes and sizes from the Thirteenth and Fourteenth century. Pictures in the museum of dilapidation from earlier times contrast with the reality of the present day – this is tourist country as exemplified by the discrete signboards that attract the visitor from one restaurant or small hotel to the next; the elderly woman sitting outside her house and intently crocheting on a frame balanced on her knees and almost oblivious to the cameras pointing at her; and the comfort of walking along a spacious and well-maintained pedestrian thoroughfare - not a roadway, for the island has no cars.

Best of all? End of the day and sitting at the open bar overlooking the small modern port – fishing and recreation vessels to one side – and out of the heat of the August sun and in the shade of the trees, looking across the mirror-like surface of the lake to those purple-green hills and waiting for the MV Perugia to return – and with an ice cold drink on hand  $\blacksquare$ 

#### Port village

But it is perhaps the exquisite nature of the



<u>Map Lake Trasimeno</u>. The largest lake in the Italian peninsular, but shallow and highly susceptible to the amount of rainfall and, without management, at risk of becoming an inland swamp. Showing the three islands and the main coastal communities.





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In questo doloroso momento è per noi di estremo conforto sentire la solidarietà di persone sensibili come Voi.

Si ringrazia di cuore e si porgono cordiali saluti.

IL SINDACO

Fernando Ferioli

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# **GRANDMAS & GRANDPAS**

(excerpts taken from the book "Gradmas & Grandpas", edited by Richard & Helen Exley)

A Grandmother is a little old lady, who comments on the weather and how tall you are getting, tells everyone the latest gossip and all about her son who came to see her. She lets you do what you shouldn't and if mum complains she says "Remember when you were little and I caught you dipping your finger in the sugar bowl? You're not too old for a clip round the year".

Jackie Thompson

Grandmothers are the old in the world of the young, and are continually having the "good old days" wiped out of the conversation. They long to help and yearn to be loved.

*Rita Bourke* Perhaps the best definition of the grandmother, is somebody who spent her time telling your mother what not do to, when she was young. And now spends her time, criticism your mother for giving you the same advice.

Calvin Giles (Age 12)

My Grandfather is not really like any old man for he is 86 years old and has a special driving license and swims in ice cold lakes in which I would never dare to put my foot. One must not think of him as a first class madman, or at least one can think as one wants but I still think and will think he is the nicest and most considerate person I have had the chance to bump into.

P Ham (Age 13)

Granddads are very lazy and sit back smoking and watch old films. Some granddads stay asleep all day until they feel hungry then they wake up. After tea they go back to sleep. My Granddad calls me bacon bonze.

Mark Ward (Age 9)

I think my granddad is fantastic, most granddads are. If you are saving up for something they are like walking piggy banks and give you money.

Jeremy Shilling



Sandra Dale (Age 9)



Samantha Weinstein (Age 9)







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Italy





Woman playing with cat Japanese Edo Period 1843-47 Utagawa Kunisada MFA Boston

# LA PROMESSA

### di Flavia Carbonetti

ra quasi buio quando decisero di uscire in giardino. Fecero fatica a trovarlo. In un angolo dell'orto, dietro una vecchia rete di ferro, un batuffolino bianco e grigio gridava con tutto il fiato che aveva in corpo. Malgrado fosse piccolissimo il suo pianto sovrastava il rumore della pioggia battente che ormai da più di mezz'ora cadeva senza sosta. Per quello l'avevano sentito e per quello l'avevano trovato. Lei lo asciugò con delicatezza; aveva ancora gli occhi chiusi ed il cordone ombelicale attaccato. "Meno di tre giorni" pensò e lo mise in una scatola non troppo grande con dentro un panno caldo in un posto tranquillo della casa dove avrebbe potuto riposare indisturbato. Era così piccolo che era stato difficile dargli del latte senza un biberon specifico per cuccioli ed ormai era tardi per andare in città "domani mattina cercherò la sua mamma" si disse e guardandolo con tenerezza chiuse la luce.

Non pioveva più, la terra arida di quel caldo mese di giugno aveva già assorbito tutta l'acqua caduta a catinelle dal cielo il giorno prima e così lei si avviò con il piccolo batuffolino alla ricerca della sua mamma. Si sedette non molto lontano da dove aveva trovato quel piccoletto e non dovette attendere molto per vedere arrivare una sinuosa ma minuscola pantera nera; in effetti, quella gatta veniva spesso in giardino, la guardava sempre senza paura avvicinandosi per farsi accarezzare. Quella mattina però,

quando lei le porse il suo piccolo, divenne una belva feroce. Dopo averlo annusato, cercò di picchiarlo, di morderlo e soffiando scappò indispettita. Era orafano! Le dissero in seguito

che era per colpa sua; mamma gatta lo aveva rifiutato perchè lei lo aveva toccato e l'odore umano lo aveva marchiato a vita. La famiglia di lei non voleva adottarlo "ci darà dei problemi, è una responsabilità" le dissero ma lei insistette; era orfano, era piccolo, era affamato e poi era tutta colpa sua; anche se voleva salvarlo dal diluvio lo aveva condonnato ad essere solo. Comunque non ci mise molto a convincerli. C'era spazio a casa e poi promise che se ne sarebbe occupata solo lei, sarebbe diventata lei la sua mamma.



Korean artist Kim Hong-do (Danwon) (1745-c.1806)



Non fu facile allevare un esserino così piccolo e con il tempo lei si rese conto che era stato abbandonato al suo destino non solo perchè lo aveva toccato ma anche perchè non era proprio in salute. Aveva un mese quando un ictus lo colpì lasciandolo cieco di un occhio, sordo ad un orecchio e paralizzato ad una gamba. Ma lei lo curò, con pazienza ed amore e lui guarì, completamente. Da allora il suo nome da micino divenne Ercole. Circa ogni tre mesi si recavano dal veterinario per qualche problema ma lui guariva, sempre. Diventò un magnifico gattone di otto chili che quando camminava strusciava il suo pancione sul pavimento. Chi non ha mai avuto un gatto sbaglia a dire che i gatti non ti amano, che sono solo degli opportunisti. Lui ricambiava le sue cure con tutto il suo cuore di gatto, affettuoso quasi appiccicoso, giocherellone e simpatico. In casa dove era lei, era lui. Lui dormiva con lei sotto il piumone con il musetto sulla sua spalla o sul suo cuscino intorno alla sua testa, come se fosse una coroncina di fiori. Poi un giorno arrivò il secondo ictus.

Era stato un caldo mese di luglio, afoso e torrido allo stesso tempo. Lui impazzì improvvisamente e lei fu obligata a chiudersi dentro il bagno per due ore con una tigre che batteva alla porta, che soffiava e miagolava con rabbia. Quando lui si calmò lei lo porto in clinica e poi lo curò. Ercole rinsavì ma il suo sguardo era cambiato e spesso lei aveva la pelle d'oca quando lui camminava alle sue spalle. Il secondo ictus peggiorò il suo stato di salute generale ed i controlli in clinica divennero ancora più frequenti. Poi un giorno lui si mise a miagolare, disperatamente, guardando una parete bianca. Lei capì che c'era qualche cosa d' altro e decise di cambiare dottore. Lui le annunciò con delicatezza che il suo amico era molto ammalato "due tumori" le disse "mi dispiace, forse un mese o due, ma deve abituarsi all'idea di perderlo".



Donna con gatto di Vittorio Reggianini (1858 - 1938)



Sig.na Julie Manet con gatto Pierre Auguste Renoir 1887



Passarono due anni. Tutte le settimane andavano in clinica ed il veterinario che lo aiutò. lo curò con tutta la sua professionalità, pazienza ed amore. "E' un gatto così forte e dignitoso, è proprio un Ercolino" disse "diventerà un caso clinico". Ma la situazione precipitò improvvisamente; in un mese lui si cosumò. Lei prendeva le ferie per stargli vicino. Quella sera lei si addormentò al suo capezzale con la mano che teneva la sua zampetta. Si svegliò improvvisamente sentendosi osservata; lui la guardava fisso e lo sguardo di quei begli occhi gialli era così profondo ed intenso. Lei cercò di dargli dell'acqua con il contagoccie ma lui la rifiutò. Dopo poco una crisi cardiaca lo portò via.

Dopo qualche giorno, nel dormiveglia, a lei sembrò di sentirlo salire sul letto. Il suo amico le disse di non preoccuparsi "sto bene, qui c'è mamma gatta che mi sta facendo vedere come devo fare" strusciò il musetto contro il suo viso facendo le fusa e poi svanì. Lei non lo sognò mai più.

Chi non ha mai amato un gatto non sa cosa si prova a perderlo. Le mancava tanto ma lei era serena, aveva mantenuto la promessa



Byeon-Song Byeok Myojako (gatti e passerotti)



Woman with a cat Suvorova Olga.





kitten chasing bird Asian Painting

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# **History of the Ancient Town of Sutri**



Located at the foot of both the Cimini and the Sabatini Mountains, the town of Sutri controlled a natural corridor which originally linked the territory of Southern Etruria to coastal towns and later the Etruscan power to that of the emerging Roman Empire. The first documented settlement is to be found in the late Bronze Age and was probably formed by the concentration of a group of villages in the more easily defensible plateau. After the destruction of Veii in 396 B.C., Sutri was absorbed into the Roman Empire and used as a gateway into Etruria, although the town was long disputed by both the Etruscan and Roman Empires.

The town's location on the Via Cassia, which had become a major commercial route linking the North and South, together with the economic and political calm of the first centuries of the Roman Empire made Sutri a thriving agricultural and crafts centre. Later conquered by the Longobards, Sutri was donated to Pope Gregory II by King Liutprand. The town's importance grew in the Middle Ages, when thousand of pilgrims and merchants traveled to and from Rome along the Via Cassia, Known at that time as the Via Francigena Romea. The town was able to exploit the constant flow of travelers, developing in the valley below the more ancient town centre, offering accommodation alongside established trade activities.

During this period, many important figures passed through the town of Sutri and it was also the site of many historically significant meetings: Charles the Great stopped in the town as he made his way to Rome to be crowned Emperor; the Synod known as the Council of Sutri, leading to the election of Pope Clement II was held here; Emperor Henry V and Pope Pashcal II signed the

"Iuramentum Sutrinum" in the town; Pope Adrian IV and Frederick I (known as Barbarossa) met in Sutri. The town's decline begins at the end of the Middle Ages as it bears the brunt of the power struggles between important Roman families leading to Sutri's collapse and destruction. The re-routing of trade from the Via Cassia to the Cassia Cimina by the Farnese family also leads to the loss of its strategic role. The many ruins visible today, in and around the town, are a testimony to Sutri's historical importance and its glorious past.







è ammantellata ?" Oggi uno di quei segni è esposto nella sua perfetta grazia di bronzo, nella sua super custodita urna di cristallo, Biancaneve odierna che racconta non una favola ma una realtà antichissima ritrovata casualmente, custodita nella perennità del tempo e ora presentata per la nostra meraviglia alla sempre vigile voglia di conoscenza.

"The Ephebus of Sutri is part of series of images of young men portrayed in this position that we can find in many museums. The creator of this kind of work is Praxiteles and this statue is a Roman copy", così le informazioni del folder atttirano la nostra attenzione, Come si può non desiderare di vedere di persona tanta meraviglia?

 $Informazioni \quad :0761-609380 \text{-www.comune.sutri.vt.it-turistico@comune.sutri.vt.it}$ 

# "Sutrium ire"

di Patrizia Cimini

One hundred years since the discovery of the Ephebus of Sutri

Così è titolato il folder che presenta ai visitatori del Museo del Patrimonium a Sutri la celebrità in mostra e attira visitatori da ogni parte d'Italia e del mondo. Sutri ,50 chilometri da Roma sulla Cassia Veientana, rannicchiata sull'alta scogliera di tufo conserva le sue antiche radici e sembra interrogare chi va a visitarla :" Che vuoi tu viaggiatore che dai tempi dell'antichità percorri il mio territorio usando la strada francigena e le altre vie e non sai quanti già sono passati e hanno lasciato qui impronta di anfiteatri scavati nel tufo, di mosaici, di testimonianze di paladini, di torri medievali e via via ogni presenza ha tatuato il suo segno che Sutri e il territorio circostante ne





# Chickpeas and Pasta Soup (Zuppa di Pasta e ceci)

by Edith Mahabir

Ingredients 200 gr chickpeas 1 tsp bicarbonate soda (optional) 2 cloves garlic 1 anchovy fillet (preserved in oil) Rosemary (fresh) 2 tbsps olive oil 150 gr short pasta or maltagliati

### Method

Soak the chickpeas overnight in abundant water and one teaspoon of bicarbonate soda. Drain the chickpeas and and place in a terracotta or heavy pot and cover with an abundant litre of cold water, one clove of garlic and a branch of rosemary. Bring to the boil, removing any froth that forms. Then reduce heat and cook over low heat, simmering gently until the chickpeas are soft.

In a small casserole or frying pan heat one tablespoon of olive oil, the remaining clove of garlic and the anchovy, fry these together mixing with a wooden spoon, when the garlic becomes brown (not burnt) remove it. Add to the pan a ladleful of chickpeas, press them with a fork to reduce almost to a paste. Add this mixture to the chickpeas in the pot, bring to the boil adding some water if necessary, then add the short pasta or maltagliati. Cook stirring occasionally until the pasta is ready according to your taste. Add a tablespoon of olive oil, allow to rest or *mantecare* for a couple minutes. Serve hot.

This is a favourite traditional Roman soup and can be found on restaurant menus enjoyed during autumn, winter and spring. However, I have introduced it to my family in Trinidad and they enjoy it all year round, often with a little hot pepper. NO Parmesan cheese with this please!



# Wild Mushroom Tart

by Jennifer A. Thomas

Ingredients

350 gr mixed wild mushrooms, cleaned
350 gr floury potatoes
200 ml milk
142 ml fresh cream
1 garlic clove, crushed
50 gr butter
freshly grated nutmeg
250 gr frozen puff pastry
flour, for dusting
100 gr taleggio cheese



Method

Roughly slice the mushrooms . Peel and thinly slice potatoes. Pour the milk and cream into a large, heavy-based saucepan, then add the garlic. Bring to the boil and tip in the potatoes. Return to the boil and simmer very gently for 10-15 minutes, stirring occasionally, until potatoes are tender.

Meanwhile, heat oven to 200°C/fan 180°C/gas 6 and put a baking sheet in the oven to heat up. Melt butter in a large frying pan. When it begins to foam, tip in the mushrooms. Cook over a high heat for about 10 minutes or until pan juices have evaporated.

When potatoes are tender, remove from the heat and season with salt, pepper and nutmeg. Remove mushrooms from heat and season too.

Roll out the pastry on a lightly floured surface and use to line a 23 cm loosebottom quiche tin. Fill with the potato mixture, spreading it out evenly, then spread the mushrooms on top and scatter with the taleggio. Slide the tart onto the hot baking sheet and bake for 20-25 minutes or until the pastry is crisp and golden brown.



