



**FRAGRANCES AND TASTY FLAVOURS FROM A LAND THAT WILL LINGER IN YOUR SENSES FOREVER**

## **HOLIDAYS IN MAREMMA**

**The Maremma Toscana mainly identifies with the land around the province of Grosseto. Here every spot evokes its historical, artistic, archaeological and cultural heritage, enriched with precious Etruscan and Roman remains and surrounded by exceptional natural reserves**

### **THE PROVINCE OF GROSSETO**

A territory reclaimed by Leopoldo II of Lorena - Grand Duke of Tuscany - in the second half of 1800, the Maremma Toscana (from the Spanish "marismas" that means marsh) is a land where man has established himself over the centuries, as witnessed by various evidences such as the Etruscan many remains as well as the ones of the Roman settlements; the Aldobrandeschi's towers, castles and fortifications, the Medici's and the Lorena's remarkable works and fortresses.

On the northern-west side, the territory is home to the Colline Metallifere and stretches into the Maremma Livornese; in its central part, run by the Rivers Ombrone, Aegna and Fiora and by the Torrent Chiarore that divides it from the Maremma Laziale, the coast is interrupted by the promontories of Punta Ala, Monti dell'Uccellina and Ansedonia while the area of Argentario was originally an island and has only recently been united to the mainland.

Among the various landscapes of the coast, it is worth visiting the "golden" and well-kept beaches of Feniglia and Giannella, in the magical atmosphere of the Lagoon of Orbetello.

The Maremma Grossetana can boast the typical Mediterranean climate: moderately hot and soothed by the sea breeze of the Mistral and the West wind in Summer; not very cold, with rare night and morning frosts in Winter.

## **MAREMMA TOSCANA: THE MAIN GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS**

To better acquaint you with the region, we have divided the Maremma Toscana into five geographical areas:

- the area housing the Colline Metallifere;
- the hilly area, from the High Valley of the Ombrone River to Mount Amiata;
- the longitudinal strip, lying parallel to the coast, from the promontories up to the offshoots of the hills;
- the area of the Tufa
- the Silver Coast and the islands.

### **MASSA MARITTIMA: THE MEDIEVAL HEART OF THE MAREMMA REGION**

#### **MASSA MARITTIMA**

Situated 20 km from the sea and at an altitude of 400 m, Massa Marittima was founded in the High Middle Ages around Monte Regio, the hill that has given the name to the typical local wines.

Its historical evidences, a real anthology of Romanic, Gothic and Renaissance architectures, gifted with extraordinary and unforgettable charm, have made the town become one of the most well-known places of the Maremma region.

The town has a remarkable layout, with Piazza del Duomo at its centre.

The "old town", lying around the splendid cathedral rich in works of art, is a real gem: you can admire the Torre del Candeliere, the Fortezza dei Senesi, the Palazzo dell'Abbondanza and the interesting Archaeological Museum housed in the ancient Palazzo del Podestà (dating back to 1225).

In Summer the town welcomes its numerous guests with events that celebrate its natural heritage, its products and monuments.

### **HILLS RICH IN METAL**

The wildest area of the province of Grosseto, bordering the provinces of Livorno, Pisa and Siena and famous since the Etruscan age thanks to the presence of precious minerals, is formed by the Colline Metallifere, covered with thick Turkey oak and ilex woods and, upwards, with chestnut and beech trees. Very characteristic villages rise on the hills, all enriched with interesting historical centres: Monterotondo Marittimo, Pontieri, Roccastrada and Massa Marittima. From here you can walk down across the woods to discover Lake Accesa and the nearby remains of some Etruscan dwellings. Since the 6th century BC, the populations of the hills surrounding the lake have always developed the working of metals, because of the presence of abundant water and some precious metals such as gold and silver. The lake, that still maintains a mysterious charm due to ancient legends handed down over time, is set in a beautiful natural habitat, rich in typical flora and fauna. We would suggest a visit to the Archaeological Park and to the Mining Park, sources of evidences of the past activities and way of life.

### **THE HILLY AREA: FROM THE HIGH VALLEY OF THE OMBRONE RIVER UP TO MOUNT AMIATA**

Lying in the heart of the province of Grosseto, the valley of the Ombrone River, running alongside the main highway connecting Firenze with Siena, is worth visiting: woods, rivers, historical centres and secluded monuments make the valley attractive, with cultivated areas alternating with wild fields, rows of cypresses and the dense maquis of the valley of Sticciano. The fauna of the area is quite interesting and includes the marten, the porcupine, the wild boar, the roe-deer, the harrier eagle, the dipper and probably also the otter. You should go and see the historical centres of Casal di Pari, Civitella Marittima, Paganico, Campagnatico, Sasso d'Ombrone, Batignano and Sticciano. Mount Amiata (1736 m), the only mountain in southern Tuscany, stands out in the panorama of the Maremma: from 800m upwards it is covered with a rich forest of chestnut trees, fir and beech trees; it is famous for its medieval villages, its gastronomy as well as for its ski slopes. Also to be suggested is a visit to Arcidosso, Castel del Piano, Santa Fiora and Seggiano.

Besides the Natural Reserves, from the paths of the Parco Faunistico dell'Amiata, on the northern side of Mount Labbro, you can have the chance to see deer, fallow deer, wolves, chamois and roe-deer.

### **THE LONGITUDINAL STRIP, LYING PARALLEL TO THE COAST**



The sea surely represents one of the most important resources of the Maremma region and its water is among the clearest in Italy. The coast, 160m long, can boast 17 tourist harbours, high coasts, small inlets and very long sandy beaches. The hinterland stretches from the coastal promontories up to the offshoots of the hills that divide the rivers of the Grosseto area. The promontory standing from Follonica and Castiglione della Pescaia, mainly covered with maquis and oak woods, is well-known for its beaches, the harbour of Punta Ala and also for its various Natural Reserves and Protected Areas. It is worth visiting Castiglione della Pescaia as well as the Etruscan necropolises and remains of Vetulonia, Scarlino, Buriano, Tirli, the Roman Villa del Puntone and the Etruscan necropolises of San Germano and Poggio Tondo. At Grosseto, the chief town of the province, rich in history and tradition, you can admire the Medici walls and the cathedral. Thanks to its central location, Grosseto also represents a starting point for visiting the whole Maremma region. The hills that divide the courses of the rivers Ombrone, Albegna and Fiora host the most classical villages, already used as strong points by the Etruscans against the Romans. These small centres, steep, with few inhabitants but frequented by man since ancient times (20,000 years ago), have become holiday resorts, and offer splendid panoramas and a quite dry climate. Also to be seen are Capalbio, Manciano, Magliano in Toscana (with the near ruins of the Romanic church of San Bruzio), Montemerano, Montiano and Scansano.

## **THE MAREMMA NATURE PARK**

### **ONE OF THE FIRST PROTECTED AREAS IN ITALY**

The Maremma region has been enriched with protected areas that cover about 40,000 hectares of natural reserves, offering a wealthy naturalistic heritage that includes coasts and hinterlands, swampy areas and mountain peaks. The Park (9,800 hectares), established in 1975, is one of the most interesting protected as well as being one of the most visited areas in Tuscany and is easily reached from Grosseto and from Via Aurelia. The hills of the Park, standing among the plain of the mouth of the Ombrone River, the splendid Pineta Granducale and the rough calcareous ridge of the Monti dell'Uccellina, reach 415m at their highest at Poggio Lecci. Covered with a dense maquis and dotted with medieval towers, they host the Maremma breed of cattle and horses, the wild boar, the fallow deer, the porcupine and various other species of small mammals. Among the birds there are the marsh harriers, the fish hawks, herring gulls, herons, kingfishers, hen harriers and bee-eaters. We would also recommend that you visit the remarkable Abbazia di San Rabano, founded by the Benedictines and fortified in 1321 to face up to Barbary raids, then dismantled by the Senesi in 1400.

The protected area can be reached by the means of transport placed at your disposal by the Park itself, that connect the centre of Albanese with Pratini; from here you will continue on foot along set itineraries.

### **THE AREA OF THE TUFA (A SPONGY TYPE OF ROCK)**

To the East of Saturnia and of the course of the Fiora River, the region of Maremma looks changed. Around the lava-stone houses, the walls, the palaces and churches of the fortified villages of Pitigliano and Sorano, the landscape varies in an alternation of vineyards, olive groves and deep valleys excavated in the tufa by the water of the Lente and Fologna rivers and their tributaries. To the South there is the Selva del Lamone, an entangled oak and ilex wood, and the boundary between the provinces of Grosseto and Viterbo. The paths go across panoramic plateaus and then through the canyons in the tufa, already used during the Etruscan age. You will be surprised by Pitigliano, clung to a tufaceous spur, the small fortress of Castell'Ottieri and the Etruscan-medieval rock settlement of Monte Vitozzo, that looks like the Sassi di Matera.

Saturnia, whose fortune depends on both the thermals springs and its location nearby Via Clodia and Via Aurelia, boasts an avant-garde spa, among one of the best in the peninsula, and is set in an attractive landscape with the natural falls of the sulphurous water gushing out at a temperature of 37°.

### **PITIGLIANO: CLUNG TO A CLIFF OF TUFA**

The village of Pitigliano (313m a.s.l.) protected by a 16th-century fortification, rises on a ridge of tufa, among green valleys. The Etruscan settlement dates back to the 8th century BC and there are evidences of the presence of the Romans from around the 1st and 2nd centuries. We recommend a visit to the medieval Palazzo Orsini, restored in 1500. Thanks to the characteristic of the rock which can be easily worked, over the centuries a civilization of the tufa has been established, of which even the Jewish have left particular evidences, after having found refuge here starting from the second half of 1600. Bianco di Pitigliano was the first wine to be provided with the DOC label in Maremma: conserved at room temperature in the cellars excavated in the tufa, it goes well with the typical local sweet, the so-called "Sfratto di Pitigliano".

### **THE SILVER COAST AND THE ISLANDS**

The area is a real paradise, to be advised to those who love the wonders of the sea and the treasures of the land. Mount Argentario, with bays and inlets sometime reachable only from the sea, thanks to its abundance of fish and to its seabed rich in gorgonians and corals, is considered one of the most interesting marine zone in Italy by the scuba-divers. Here, as in past times, you can enjoy the real Maremmana life, where the local cattle are still bred.

The sea provides inhabitants and guests with exceptional fish such as the gilthead, the bass and shellfish for a tasty

fish soup.

Argentario, (635m) the highest and most varied promontory in Tuscany was an ancient calcareous island, now united to the coast by tombolos (narrow strips of sand): the one called Giannella to the North, running by a road connecting with Via Aurelia, and the one called Feniglia to the South, a narrow 6 km-long dune that can be covered only on foot or by bike. The sea between Argentario and the mainland forms the Lagoon of Orbetello, one of the most important humid areas in Italy, protected by a Regional Reserve (950 hectares) and by a WWF Oasis (200 hectares). It hosts 250 species of birds, among which the stilt, the flamingo, the spoonbill and the bee-eater. It's worth visiting the historical centre of Orbetello, a beautiful town called "the little Venice of the Tyrrhenian Sea", as well as Porto Santo Stefano, Porto Ercole, the archaeological areas of Ansedonia, the Islands Giannutri and Giglio, included in the National Park of the Tuscan Archipelago.

### **ISOLA DEL GIGLIO**

Not the scented flower but the goat ("jgilion" in the Greek language) has given its name to Isola del Giglio, the second-largest island of the Tuscan Archipelago, lying about 18 km from the promontory of Argentario. The exploitation of the mining resources of the island, that supplied iron for the Etruscan's precious artefacts, started from the 8th century, and the remains of the Villa of Giglio Porto are the evidences of the Roman domination dating around the 1st-2nd centuries BC.

Largely mountainous, with slopes and terraces, Isola del Giglio has characteristic beaches next to beautiful bays, sometimes not easy to be reached.

The village of Giglio Castello rises on a hill at 400m a.s.l. It is a defensive structure erected by the Pisani in the 12th century, well-preserved, that still boasts attractive spots and narrow lanes surmounted by arches. We would suggest a visit to the village and the fortress at Giglio Castello as well as to the tower at Campese.

At Isola del Giglio, besides the honey and the "panficato" (soft and sweet bread), you can't miss a glass of Ansonaco, to be tasted in one of the local cellars where it is produced and conserved.

## ***CUISINE***

### **EATING IN MAREMMA**

A tour in Maremma also means discovering the flavours of the local cuisine, rich in genuine produce from the land and fish from the sea, to be tasted together with its extra-virgin oil and the famous DOC wines. Here the connoisseurs come to taste the real distinctive typical products, first of all the meat of Maremma: pork, lamb, wild boar and other game. But also the sea provides a rich quantity of fish such as basses, gilthead and soles, still cooked according to the traditional recipes, from the "palamita" of the Tuscan Archipelago to the characteristic specialities from the Lagoon of Orbetello (botargo of grey mullet, conger and fillets of smoked grey mullet).

The food-and-wine tour goes through the Wine Trails of the Maremma: Colli di Maremma, Monteregio-Massa Marittima and Montecucco. Among the DOC wines, we would mention Morellino di Scansano, Bianco di Pitigliano, Parrina, Ansonica Costa dell'Argentario, Capalbio and Monteregio di Massa Marittima.

## ***GETTING THERE***

**By car:** SS.1 – E80 Aurelia

**By plane:** National and international airports of Pisa, Firenze and Roma

**By train:** Genova-Roma railway line.

### **AGENZIA PER IL TURISMO DELLA MAREMMA**

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