



## WATER AS SOURCE OF ETERNAL YOUTH, IN MAREMMA

# TERME DI SATURNIA

**The philosophy of Terme di Saturnia arises from the concept of global wellbeing based on a perfect psychophysical balance, through the integration of the five areas of wellness: Hydrotherapy, Beauty, Stress Management, Nutrition and Fitness. The composition of Saturnia water, thanks to its hot temperature and its properties, stimulates the entire body in a positive way, while highly skilled treatments are able to act on deeper causes of the plight of persons. Other spas and beauty farms are springing up in Maremma, a land rich in healing waters.**

### **TRADITION AND THERMAL BATHS IN TUSCANY**

In ancient times, water was always considered a source of worship and purification and, for centuries, the thermal baths were the only natural remedy and treatment for all types of physical disorders; the baths were also regular-

ly attended by many people as meeting places. Numerous thermo-minerals sources in the Tuscan Maremma, already popular and well-known by the Etruscans and then by Romans (Chianciano, Roselle, San Giuliano, Saturnia, etc.), still constitute a valuable and significant natural heritage for health and wellness.

Abandoned and stripped in the Middle Ages, the baths had a first revival in the Renaissance and, from Enlightenment onwards, some thermal centres regained splendour as places for social life, care and rest, along with some smaller ones attended by the poorer classes.

Today, in Tuscany, there are about fifty spas, with renewed accommodation facilities, which offer various services spanning everything, from traditional thermal therapies to the latest innovative treatments, as well as every answer to everyone's needs of wellness and fitness, for a new lifestyle in harmony with nature. Besides the obvious symbiosis of the two terms of health and wellness, in the most famous spas you can even enjoy sports facilities, perfectly equipped for each type of activity, as well as various entertainment opportunities.

Also the environment in which these spas are located, the Tuscan countryside, always gratifying for its extraordinary natural beauty, contributes to the full achievement of everybody's psychophysical well-being.

## **SATURNIA:THE THERMAL BATHS**

The small village of Saturnia (commune of Manciano in the province of Grosseto), stands in the Tuscan Maremma, at the confluence of the rivers Albegna and Stellata, in a dominant position overlooking the renowned Terme di Saturnia, whose history have inevitably been linked to that of the village with the same name. Unfortunately, the rich and important ancient town of Saturnia was almost completely lost. The settlements already existing in the archaic Villanovan period, in this favourable and strategic geographic position abundant in natural water sources at optimal temperature, are witnessed by the finds now housed at the "Museo di Preistoria e Protostoria della Valle del fiume Fiora", established in the last century in the nearby town of Manciano. Saturnia, the Etruscan Aurinia, thriving centre in the prosperous countryside of Maremma, was a safe destination for the Etruscans, with its good land for pasture and crops, abundance of clay and travertine as construction materials, large quantities of river and thermal water. For this reasons, the city eventually became the most important centre of an area extending from the Monte Amiata to the sea: roads, walls and gates were constructed, including Porta Romana, crossed by Via Clodia, the important route connecting Rome with Etruria. After the decline of the town of Vulci, for a certain time Saturnia remained an important centre under the Roman dominion and, in 183 BC, it became a Roman colony. But during the Empire and the early Middle Ages, the town gradually decayed and fell in a state of disrepair. Later it was ruled by the noble Aldobrandeschi family, the Orsini and then it was given as fiefdom by Ferdinando I de' Medici to the Marquis Ximenes of Aragon. Engaged in the struggles between the noble families and the cities of the region (Siena, Orvieto, Perugia), Saturnia went again to rack and ruin: it was repeatedly attacked, looted and destroyed, it lost importance and prestige and its population was dispersed.

Near the village you can see the remains of some wide Etruscan necropolises as well as the ruins of the Roman walls and monuments and a few sections of the ancient Via Clodia. Also the history of the baths and the waterfalls of Gorello followed the same prosperity and decline conditions of the town of Saturnia, and even became inhospitable places only frequented by a few herds of animals. Passed in 1867 to the Ciacci family, the territory of Saturnia finally regained the appearance of its best years. Today the baths have become very popular and can offer performances at a very high level.

## **SATURNIA:THE THERMAL BATHS**

Located about two miles from the town, Terme di Saturnia is the main spa complex in Maremma, fully appreciated since 1982. The Spa is enjoyed both by lovers of tourism and lovers of body care and relaxation, who can find a well equipped structure up to expectations.

The thermal waters, meteoric waters that are enriched by the dissolving substances of the soil, differ from each other for the temperature at which they emerge from the natural spring and for the mineral content types. At Terme di Saturnia, the water is rich in sulfate-bicarbonate calcium-magnesium and springs at a temperature of 37.5 ° C. at the rate of 600-800 litres per second. It produces a particularly effective action on the respiratory tract (anticatarrhal and anti-inflammatory functions) and is particularly suitable for arthropathy, the circulatory system and the cure of skin diseases, making the skin dry and smoother. The treatments are covered by the National Health Service.

Various are the treatments offered by Terme di Saturnia: inhalation therapy, hydrotherapy, mud therapy, irrigations, rehabilitation, skin care, diets and detoxification, holistic medicine and spa treatments. Indeed Terme di Saturnia, refined and exclusive spa complex including a hotel, is open all the year round and is known throughout the world. It can also boast outdoor and indoor pools with hot sulphurous water, artificial waterfalls, Jacuzzis and wellness water in the area of the Beauty Farm.

Actually, the Wellness Centre of new generation is intended to satisfy the most demanding requirements for body care, therapies, massages, beauty treatments and special personalized diets.

The refined hotel of the spa is provided with 180 rooms, some of which overlooking the pool where the hot thermal waters abound. The guests of Terme di Saturnia can avail themselves of tennis courses, bowling greens, golf courses, sauna, Turkish baths, whirlpools and waterfalls for idrofiness.

It is also possible to go on guided excursions to discover the beauty of nature and the village of Saturnia, as well as to play golf in the new 18-hole course recently opened.

## CASCATELLE DEL MOLINO

Less than 2 km from the spa, it is worth stopping even at the Cascatelle del Molino, popular waterfalls, very crowded, whose access is free and where it is particularly pleasant to dive, thanks to their exceptional beauty. The hot waters, wasted from the spa, run along the bed of the stream "il Gorello" through the reeds, and form a series of waterfalls near a disused mill, digging smooth basins and small hollows in the travertine. There are several young and adult guests who like playing in the white and blue waters, warm and sulfur, at the constant temperature of 37 °C.

## GETTING AROUND

Thanks to the location of Terme di Saturnia in Maremma, the visitors can enjoy panoramas and views ranging from the inland hills, which in spring are coloured by the blooms of the yellow brooms, to the valley crossed by the River Albegna on one hand, and the summit of Mount Amiata, the main mountain range of the territory, on the other. Not far from here, there is the Tyrrhenian Sea of Monte Argentario. Several interesting villages located in the heart of the Maremma of Grosseto, can easily be reached from Saturnia; among them we would like to mention Manciano, Montemerano, Sorano, Pitigliano Scansano, the towns of the tuff, rich in thermal water sources and historical and archaeological remains of ancient and glorious civilizations such as the Etruscan one. The local festivities evoke beautiful memories every year. In the heart of the Tuscan hills, the link between the natural and the anthropogenic agents has created surprising places, sometimes even surreal. Pitigliano perched on a plateau of tuff with its impressive fortress outside the routes of mass tourism, is a typical village in the day but looks like a magic crib at night. In the sixteenth century, "Little Jerusalem" was the site of a large Jewish community, whose Association group still supports the cultural and historical events in the ancient village. Through a steep and winding Etruscan route of communication, surrounded by a thick vegetation, you can see the tombs and the significant vases and bowls of the Etruscan necropolis of Gradone. Not to be missed the tomb of Velhur and Larthia. About 4 km from Pitigliano, towards Bolsena, in a cool and shady valley, it has recently been restored a historical Jewish bath, fed by a waterfall flowing at 37 ° C; today, it houses a relaxation and wellness center.

Even Sorano, the small but charming birthplace of Pope Gregory VII, which welcomes you with the solid Orsini Fortress and the maze of alleys characteristics of its historical center, is surrounded by interesting archaeological sites: it is recommended a visit to the necropolis of San Rocco, in the valley of the River Lente (Hildebrand Tomb and the Tomb of the Siren). Again, on the road to Pitigliano, we are welcomed by the new Terme di Sorano, immersed in a wide green area, which hosts the superb architecture of the Gothic-Romanesque church of Santa Maria dell'Aquila.

The visit to these villages can sometimes be tiring, but well worth, especially when interspersed with a few stops to taste the local gastronomic specialities: the excellent cheese, produce of the scented pastures, and a glass of fresh white wine from the surrounding hills.

**Pitigliano: Ufficio A.P.T.**

tel 0564 617111

**Sorano: Ufficio Informazioni,**

Tel. 0564 633099.

## *Cuisine*

Italian and foreign tourists are delighted by the culinary traditions of this area, ranging from peasant local cooking to the cuisine related to farming and hunting: the high quality of locally produced ingredients, the authenticity of flavours and presentation of dishes that still date back to a local ancestral tradition. Bread without salt, extra virgin olive oil, fresh vegetables from the garden, the variety of readily available grains, are the starting point for a varied and healthy cuisine. Among the first courses, the choice ranges from pappardelle with rabbit sauce, the picci with garlic, the soup with tomatoes, pearl barley soup and the famous ribollita. Among the main courses, we recommend the boar in dolce e forte, the peposo alla fornacina and rabbit alla cacciatora, and, among the local wines, Bianco di Pitigliano and Morellino di Scansano. After stew vegetables or beans all'uccelletto, it is delicious to finish with a slice of castagnaccio or cantucci dipped in Vinsanto.

## *Getting there*

**By car:** A1 Milano-Bologna-Firenze-Roma. Exit Firenze

Certosa, then follow the highway towards Siena

Grosseto-Scansano-Montemerano-Saturnia.

**By plane:** Roma Fiumicino or Firenze Peretola

**By train and bus:** Grosseto station. Milano-Roma line  
or Genova-Roma with bus connections.

**For further information:**

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