



Provincia di
Trapani

Calatafimi Segesta

Welcome





Calatafimi is...

An Elymian centre with Hellenistic overtones, Segesta's origins date back to Acestes, son of the Trojan nymph Egesta who welcomed Aenea during his wanderings. The majestic Doric temple of the V century B.C., which is still complete, is of great interest. On the summit of the mountain is the Greek

amphitheatre which, in summer is animated with important events, and from which one can enjoy a suggestive view over the surrounding valleys. In the archaeological park, there is also the large Sanctuary of Mango district from the VI-V century B.C., a castle, a medieval church and the ruins of an ancient Mosque.

Near Segesta is the medieval town of Calatafimi, with the Eufemio Castle and the rich churches, which is characterised by alleyways and roads of clear Islamic origins. It is on the high ground of Pianto Romano facing it that the harsh battle of Garibaldi's Thousand was fought.

Segesta, Doric temple



Alleyway



Pianto Romano, ossuary





History

The city takes its name from Qal-at-Fimi, which translated from Arabic means Fortress of Eufemio, who was the official serving Bisanzio who, according to tradition, favoured the Arabs' entrance into Sicily. Other sources identify it either with Acesta, town from the same period as Segesta, or with Castrum

Phimes, from the name of a nobleman and important agriculturist remembered by Cicerone. After being royal state property land under the Normans, it became the stronghold of Guglielmo, son of Federico III of Aragona. It later passed into the hands of barons and various lords keeping in the background

until liberation, after centuries of silence, with the victorious battle of the 15th of May 1860 on the hills of Pianto Romano, supported by Garibaldi against the Bourbon troops, led by General Landi, during which Garibaldi said the historic sentence: Qui si fa l'Italia o si muore! - Here we create Italy or we die!

Eufemio Castle



Medieval city wall



Battle of Calatafimi





Landscape

From the hills on which rises the charming Eufemio castle, there is an incredible view of the town and over the valley of the river Kaggera initially called Flumen molinorum where today, the remains of watermills still exist which not only milled the wheat but allowed the irrigation of

the land. The extraordinarily beautiful valley still has the ancient gardens of citrus fruit and vegetables with a very suggestive contrast of vegetation. The presence of irrigation water makes the difference between the cultivated areas and the rocky dry garrigue areas. The alleyways and courtyards in

the inhabited nucleus of the town are twisted and labyrinth-like, clearly showing the town's Islamic background and, create an urban landscape of great interest. From Segesta there are fantastic views from Mount Sparagio and Mount Inici, to the stupendous Gulf of Castellammare.

Urban Landscape



Kaggera valley



Archaeological area of Segesta





Nature

Angimbè Wood in the north of the town represents an ecological niche of extraordinary beauty characterized by age-old cork oaks (*Quercus suber*). Singled out by the European Community as a SCI (Site of Community Importance), it covers 212 hectares and is managed by the Demanio Forestale

(State Forestry Commission). The ecosystem which may be unique to Sicily, permits numerous animal and bird species. The numerous pathways made by the Forestry Corps allow visits through the wood. In the splendid landscape of the archaeological area of Segesta, there is also Bosco

Pispisa and the Vallone della Fusa, also known as Vallone della Vipera, a deep incision in the rock which makes a natural boundary between Mount Barbaro and Mount Pispisa. Between its extremely green gorges runs the Vallone della Fusa stream, the most important of the tributaries of the Kaggera river.

Angimbè Wood



Pispisa Wood



Quercus suber





Traditions

The use of proverbs and sayings is noteworthy, many of which can be read in the alleyway they are dedicated to. During the festa del Crocifisso (crucifix celebration) the town organises itself into Ceti - Social Classes who parade with their symbols and standards. The main ones are: the Maestranza, ancient town militia who march in uniform

with arms; the Burgisi, farmers with richly harnessed mules, who mime the sowing of the seeds and throw sugared almonds and hazelnuts; the Cavallari on richly decorated Sicilian wagons; the Massari, ex feudal superintendents, now rich middle classes, who end the parade throwing from a magnificent wagon pulled by oxen, the cucciddati, in remembrance of the bread

distributed to the poor during the celebration. Other ceti include the Borgesi di San Giuseppe - the middle classes of San Giuseppe, the Ortolani-Vegetable Growers, the Millers, the Pecorai and Caprai - Sheep and Goat herders, the Macellai - Butchers. Those who are not part of any particular ceto are included in the Scibacia (networks).

Alleyway of proverbs



Crucifix Festival, the Burgisi



Crucifix Festival, the Massari





Religion Rememberence Bonds

The Festa del Crocifisso is a moment of great folkloristic and religious interest and is one of the grandest in Sicily, taking place during the first three days in May, every three, five or six years: it is a magnificent event, of great importance, and is characterised by abundance to celebrate the miracles carried out in the

mid 1600s by a small, wooden Crucifix and to give thanks for the harvest and work. It consists in transport, processions and parades of the Ceti (social classes), richly harnessed mules and horses, rigorously accompanied by the throwing of cakes, hazelnuts, sugared almonds, chocolates and characteristic cucciddati,

votive bread in the shape of a crown or the sun. The veneration for the Madonna del Giubino, is also very heartfelt and her marble icon is carried in a procession on the fourth Sunday of September, through the streets of Calatafimi, on a typical silver platform, accompanied by numerous followers.

Crucifix procession



Crucifix Festival, cucciddati



Madonna del Giubino procession





The churches in Calatafimi are real treasure chests of works of art: on the main altar of the Mother Church, a grandiose marble altarpiece is situated containing the marmoreal, la Vergine con Bambino fra Santi, Profeti e scene evangeliche - The Virgin with Child among Saints. Prophets and Evangelical Scenes (about 1512) attributed to

Bartolomeo Berrettaro and Giuliano Mancino. Also noteworthy is the large pipe organ, with a wooden case, and the late Byzantine tablet depicting a Madonna with child (from the Carmine church). The San Michele church holds a fourteenth century Crucifix, a San Michele (1499) of the Gagini school, a holy water stoup from the XVI century and a

wooden Santa Lucia from the same period. Eighteenth century paintings and a Madonna degli Angeli con Santi (1617), attributed to the Zoppo di Gangi - Lame man of Gangi enrich the Church of the Madonna del Giubino which, on the main altar has a precious late 1400s marble altarpiece with the Vergine del Giubino, object of ancient veneration.

Mother Church, pipe organ



Church of San Michele, Crucifix



Church of Giubino, triptych





Archaeology

Segesta proudly guards the remains of the Elymian city, of an extraordinary Doric temple, a Hellenistic amphitheatre and some strong fortifications which make it today one of the most important archaeological sites of Sicily. The temple (V century B.C.), which is still integral, is an austere example of Peripteral

hexastyle, and its incompleteness allows one to see the different phases of the construction of the temples. On the summit of the mountain, the magnificent amphitheatre (mid II century B.C.), the remains of a classic age building and a Hellenistic bouleterion show the life of the city while a portico, a paved courtyard and a

colonnade indicate the entrance to what was once the agorà in Hellenistic and Roman times. Near the amphitheatre there are the remains of a Muslim village with mosques and Norman and Swabian settlements with a castle. The remains of a sanctuary (VI-V century B.C.) can be found in Mango district.

Segesta, Doric temple



Segesta, amphitheatre



Mango Sanctuary





Monuments

The Castle Eufemio, "An ancient, primitive fortalice, not at all despicable castle", as the Arab geographer Edrisi defined it in the XIII century is the most important building, but the churches in the town centre are also of interest. The Mother Church has ancient Swabian origins and has a basilica plan type which it assumed over the XVI and

XVII centuries. The Church of SS. Crocifisso (XVIII century) is a profusion of ornate decoration and was designed by Giovanni Biagio Amico who also designed the church of the Madonna del Giubino which has a vibrant internal harmony. Also of interest is the church of San Francesco with presumed thirteenth century origins, and what

remains of the Carmine Church, built in Norman times and attached to the Carmelite monastery in 1430. In Pianto Romano an ossuary designed by the famous architect Ernesto Basile holds the remains of Garibaldi's and Bourbon soldiers who died in the battle of 15 May 1860; at Calathamet a tower and an Arab fortress remain.

Eufemio Castle



Church of SS. Crocifisso



Pianto Romano, ossuary





Museums Science

Calatafimi has a municipal library with a patrimony of 22,210 volumes, including the Fondi speciali - Special archives regarding documents from Garibaldi times. In the Archaeological Museum there are some artefacts found in the archaeological site of Segesta including two shelves in the form of the

bow of a boat (II century B.C.), an Italian-Corinth capital (II-I century B.C.), a sculptural element from a theatre scene refiguring a satyr and a maenad (III- II century B.C.). The Ethno-Anthropological Museum documents the predominantly agricultural vocation of the town, collecting objects which

show the different activities which took place in the fields, the craftsmen's workshops or simply in the domestic environment. A Centre of Performing Arts was founded as a laboratory for theatre and music activity: it has a room used also for exhibitions, conventions, conferences, fashion shows and concerts.

Municipal Library



Archaeological Museum



Etno-anthropological Museum





Typical produce

Qualified companies work in various production and commercial sectors. The ground, which is rich in clay and limestone, has a few marble and chalk quarries dotted about. A well established company makes building material based on chalk and also cement. An innovative

company makes different types of synthetic corks and lids for oenological use, for distilled liquids and oils, substituting the old cork factories, once an important part of the town. In the sector of the natural intestines destined for food use, to make skins for the manufacturing of raw and

cooked sausages, there are qualified companies which use traditional methods to process and then commercialise natural entrails of sheep, pigs and oxen made by the processing of the intestines of animals for slaughter and of other animal parts like cow and sheep bladders.

Chalk quarries



Production of natural intestines





Wine and food

The Calatafimi territory, falls partly in the Alcamo DOC area with its fine wines, and is known for its cereals, pulses, oil and for the delicious mushrooms of Carabona district. Exports include wine, smoke bush and citrus fruit. Among the citrus fruit is a fine orange

cultivar known as the Ovaletto di Calatafimi, which keeps the fruit on the plant until June even after it has fully ripened. Its genetic origin is not clear, but it seems to be a bud mutation of the Ovale Calabrese. It owes its name to its elongated tapered shape and

has an intense pleasant aroma, an excellent flavour: It is usually without seeds. The craftmade production of biscuits, cheese, and dairy products, sauces and condiments for the typical Mediterranean cuisine is flanked by the cultivation of mushrooms.

Ovaletto di Calatafimi



Typical cheese



Extra virgin olive oil





Shows and events

From July to the end of August, the amphitheatre of Segesta is the suggestive backdrop for a cycle of shows, classic plays, concerts, literary meetings. Particularly suggestive are the Albe Segestane, poetry recitals at day break. At the beginning of September, the Premio internazionale di Segesta

takes place. Another appointment is the Estate Calatafimese - Calatafimi Summer; from the end of July to the beginning of September, with various shows and events. Sometimes a Presepe vivente -Living nativity scene animates the ancient town, which is suggestively illuminated by

torchlight, with real craftsmen, farmers, housewives, and shepherds who offer tastes of food prepared there and then. The 15th May is dedicated to the Giornata Garibaldina - Garibaldi day, commemoration of those who fell during the battle between Garibaldi and the Bourbons in 1860.

Segesta, theatre season



Living Nativity Scene



Garibaldi Day





Entertainment, sport and free time

For sporting activities Calatafimi has a municipal sports centre with a football field and a provincial indoor gymnasium. Some sporting societies promote competitions, shows and events. In the surrounding area, in Gorga district, on the eastern bank of the

Caldo river, on the border with the Alcamo territory, there are thermal springs: the hypothermal alkaline, sulphurous mineral water with natural therapeutic values comes from the Gorga spring about 50 metres above sea level, and is collected in a natural basin surrounded by clay

agglomerations, maintaining a constant temperature of 51°C. A canal of about 300 m. brings the water and mud made by the natural precipice without the addition of clay to a thermal station situated in an ancient restructured mill which also has an outdoor swimming pool and saunas.

Thermal springs



Thermal springs



Thermal Station





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POR SICILIA 2000-2006. Mis. 2.02 d
PIT 6 Alcesti. Int. 28/3 codice
1999.IT.16.I.PO.011/2.02/9.03.13/0058

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