



Provincia di
Trapani

Castelvetrano



Welcome





Castelvetroano is...

Castelvetroano has an interesting historic centre where it is pleasant to walk among the fine churches and noble town houses, (including palazzo Pignatelli) and the square system. Worth visiting is the Civic Museum which holds the precious bronze statue of Ephebos of Selinunte, an important Greek colony not far away, place of meetings and battles

between the Greeks and Phoenicians. Here the vestiges of time (temples, acropolies and sanctuaries) mix with the surrounding landscape in the unique scenery of the biggest archaeological park of the Mediterranean. Castelvetroano is also a place not to be missed for its food and wine: here a characteristic “black bread” is produced and the

Nocellara del Belice olives, a particularly juicy variety, which is low in acidity, flourish. Not to be forgotten are three pearls nearby: the sandy Nature Reserve of the Belice River Mouth and Neighbouring Dunes, the lovely Norman Trinità di Delia Church and the archaeological and naturalistic complex of the Castello della pietra (castle of the stone).

Piazza Carlo D' Aragona e Tagliavia



Civic Museum, Ephebos



Nocellara del Belice





History

The oldest historiography attributes the foundation of Castelvetro to the veteran Selinunte people who had a castrum here; however, more recent and accredited theories, have it that it rose following the process of social transformation in Norman times which brought farmers into the villages. The Tagliavia who

obtained it together with the title of Barons in 1299, had an important role in the economic, urban and social development of the city. Squads of young volunteers led by fra' Giovanni Pantaleo participated in Garibaldi's action gaining Castelvetro the title "generous" from Garibaldi. As far as art and culture is concerned,

important inhabitants include the philosopher and politician Giovanni Gentile, the scholar Virgilio Titone, the musicians Giuseppe Palazzotto Tagliavia and Raffaele Caravaglios, the physicist Mariano Santangelo, plus Aristotile the orator and Aristossene the poet both from Selinunte.

Selinunte, temple E



Giovanni III of Aragona



Giovanni Gentile





Landscape

In the natural landscape of this territory, traces of the past are mixed with the agricultural landscape characterised by lines of olive trees and vines, crossed by rivers, flanked with bagli (rural fortified structures), crisscrossed with ancient quarries, offering changing images with the cultivated plain between the Belice and Modione rivers and Lake

Trinità, with the sea as a backdrop, separated from each other by the temples of Selinunte. The panorama from the acropolis of the Greek city is spectacular; from here there are 360° views over the western temples, the Mediterranean to Capo San Marco, over the mouth of the Modione river with the beach on front of it, and over Triscina, Mazzara del Vallo and

Salemi. On the coast where Belice river flows into the sea, there is the Riserva Naturale Orientata Foce del Belice e Dune limitrofe - Nature Reserve of the Belice River Mouth and Neighbouring Dunes, in which the nature is spectacular with the extraordinary beauty of the dunes covered in a sky blue colour vegetation of a psammophilous kind.

Archaeological park of Selinunte



RNO Belice and neighbouring dunes



Olive grove





Nature

The Riserva Naturale Orientata Foce del Belice e Dune limitrofe - Nature Reserve of the Belice River Mouth and Neighbouring Dunes is of great naturalistic value which covers the area of coast between Marinella di Selinunte and Porto Palo for about 130 hectares, crossed by the Belice river which flows into the sea. It includes different

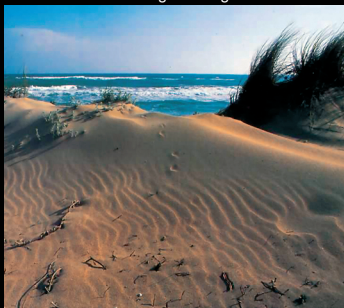
environments: the dunes, the mouth of the river with its typical marsh vegetation and in the more internal part, Mediterranean scrub. Of great interest is the dune vegetation which protects the sandy dunes from the wind. The reserve is home to a rich birdlife, both native and migratory birds, and on the beach, periodically, marine turtles (*Caretta caretta*) can

be seen depositing their eggs. Another suggestive area is the artificial lake Trinità, created in 1955 with the dam of Delia river, and used for irrigation of the agricultural terrain downstream. The Riserva del Castello della pietra - Castle of Stone Reserve is also interesting, a rocky plain which conserves Neolithic remains and a Norman castle.

Lake Trinità di Delia

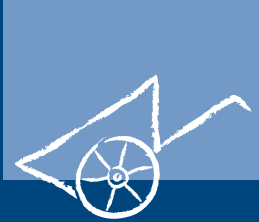


RNO Belice and neighbouring Dunes



Reserve of the Castello della pietra





Traditions

Moments which greatly involve the citizens of the city are the traditional Carnevale (Mardi Gras) parades: wagons and groups of people in costume animate the streets of the city, in particular the wagon of the *Nannu* and the *Nanna*. On the evening of the third day, in piazza

Carlo D'Aragona the *testamentu di lu nannu*, is read during which, in ironic and often licentious style, well known people and important recent events are held up to ridicule. The evening concludes with the *abbruciatina di li nanni*, that is the setting on fire of two

puppets which symbolise, with the ending of winter the burning of misfortunes, sins and pains. In March, traditional "altars" of San Giuseppe (Saint Joseph) are set up, while at Easter, the so-called "campanari" which are short crust pastries, and painted hard-boiled eggs are made.

Carnival





Religion Remembrance Bonds

On Easter morning in Piazza Carlo D'Aragona the Aurora takes place, a spectacular meeting between the statues of Madonna and Christ resurrected. An angel announces Christ's resurrection to Mary and invites her to go to him. When Mary recognises Jesus, she moves towards him and takes off her black cape and while doves fly from her crown. On the 3rd of May,

the festivity for SS. Crocifisso is celebrated, recalling the sacred effigy which was carried to Castelvetro on the orders of Prince Carlo to whom it had been entrusted by the capuchin friar saint, fra' Pietro da Mazara. On the Sunday before the 22nd of May, Santa Rita day, the Corteo Storico di Santa Rita e della nobiltà castelvetranese - Historic Procession of Saint Rita and

of the Castelvetro nobility, takes place with people dressed in fifteenth century costumes, flag wavers, music, drums and live pictures of the life of the Saint. To the patron saint San Giovanni Battista (John the Baptist) are dedicated the celebrations from the 23rd to the 28th of June, with religious celebrations, processions, shows, fireworks and a large commercial fair.

Aurora Festivity



Historic procession of Santa Rita



Saint John the Baptist procession





Art

Fine works of art decorate and animate the interiors of the churches of Castelvetro. The Mother Church has stuccoes by Antonino Ferraro (1658-60) and Gaspare Serpotta (1667-68), frescoes attributed to Guglielmo Borremans and Pietro Novelli, in addition to the Madonna del Giglio - Madonna of the Lily, and the Madonna della Misericordia - Madonna of Mercy, of the Gagini school

sometimes attributed to the workshop of Riccardo Quartararo. San Domenico church is surprisingly rich in decoration due to the frescoes and stuccoes celebrating the coming of the Messiah realized by Antonino Ferraro (1574-1580). The nearby church of San Giovanni holds works by Antonello Gagini, Gherardo delle Notti and Pietro Novelli, in addition to the Madonna di Loreto

(1489), attributed to Francesco Laurana, and a copy of the Spasimo di Raffaello (1574) by Giovan Paolo Fundulli, which comes from the San Domenico church; it also has frescoes (1901) by Gennaro Pardo from Castelvetro, who also made the curtain of the Selinus theatre. In addition, in the Annunziata church, there is a fine Madonna with child by Francesco Laurana (1467).

San Domenico church, stuccoes



Madonna with Child



Selinus Theatre, interior





Archaeology

Selinunte, the Greek city founded by the inhabitants of Megara Hyblaea around 628 B.C. is one of the richest and most suggestive archaeological parks in the world, and the biggest in Europe. The remains of the acropolis with its high defence walls, the majestic columns of Temple C, the grandeur of the ruins of Temples O, A, B,

D together with the three temples of the eastern hill, E, F, G, offer the visitor unrepeatable experiences, in a mixture of Sicilian, and Greek, myth and nature and which immerses the visitor into the history of a city which passed through periods of great development in the V century B.C. The city was always fighting against the

Elymian city of Segesta and kept relations sometimes with the Carthaginians and sometimes with Siracusa, but it was actually due to the Carthaginians that the city was destroyed in 409 B.C and remained under their rule until the first Punic war. A violent earthquake, probably in Byzantine times caused the complete destruction.

Selinunte, temple C



Selinunte, temple E



Selinunte, temple G





Monuments

The city possesses an important monumental patrimony with sumptuous churches, which frame historic buildings, an ancient gateway (1612), the Ninfa fountain, a rare example of a vertical fountain with four basins, one on top of the other (1615), and a neoclassic theatre. The sixteenth

century Mother Church, the palazzo dei principi, of thirteenth century origins, the church of Purgatorio (purgatory) (1642-1644), the Selinus theatre, with their façades, although of different styles, animate the three connecting squares of the urban centre as if they were theatrical scenery. Interesting

for its sumptuous decoration is the San Domenico church (1470 - 1580), made as the burial place for the Tagliavia family, and the baroque Collegiata di San Pietro; also noteworthy is the inside of the Carmine church with late fifteenth and sixteenth century architectural elements.

Ninfa Fountain



Mother Church



Trinità di Delia church





Museums Science Education

The Civic Museum holds works of extraordinary archaeological value including the Ephebos of Selinunte, one of the most important discoveries and one of the few original Greek (first half of the V century B.C.), in bronze. There are also ceramics from Attica and Corinthian ceramics, a marvellous bowl of red figures with Sileni (Greek

mythological figures), coins, bronzes and a lamina plumbea - leaden plate with a sacred inscription from the V century B.C., recently returned to Castelvetro from the Paul Getty Museum of Malibu. Of great interest is the Virgilio Titone archive which joins together the l'Archivio Storico Comunale - City Historic Archive and the Fondo Notarile - Notarial archive,

with rare documents from the beginning of the XVI century. The parochial archive of the Mother Church holds registers from the XV century, and the ones in the San Giovanni church archive are from 1627. Worth visiting is the Olive production Museum in Strasatto district, and, near the A29 motorway exit, the Museum of waxworks and the Sicilian wagon.

Civic Museum



Civic Museum



Titone Archive





Typical produce

Castelvetro is a lively commercial centre, centred on various activities: furniture, mechanics, craft and Tuff extraction factories. It is also a reference point due to the presence of big national companies and the biggest shopping centre of

western Sicily. Various companies work in the wood, iron and other metal sectors, realizing doors and furniture; others produce systems for management and security or articles in methacrylate. Some companies are specialized in

the beer, fuel and lubricant sectors. There are also craft workshops producing articles from glass, ceramics workshops using traditional Sicilian methods, sewing laboratories and companies specializing in the production of linen and underwear.

Wooden Sculpture



Working of the cork



Ceramic Crafts Laboratory





Wine and food

In the fertile territory of Castelvetro vines and olive trees are cultivated which give fine wines and an extra-virgin PDO oil exported all over the world made from the renowned Nocellara del Belice PDO olive, which is perfect also to eat with meals, dressed with oil, garlic and oregano or with pickled vegetables and celery.

A real speciality is the pane nero - black bread, produced with flour from two different types of local wheat: *tumminia* and *rusulidda* - which is worked by hand and baked in wood ovens; if served straight out of the oven and dressed with oil, oregano and salted sardines, it is a real delicacy for your taste buds. Fish is also important and

especially blue fish of Marinella di Selinunte, with which the *pasta a tiano di San Giuseppe*, a variation on the pasta with sardines with oven baked vegetables added is made. Delicious cheese made from local Belice sheep milk and exquisite cakes and pastries based on ricotta, almonds and figs complete this typical cuisine.

Nocellara del Belice PDO Olive



Black Bread



Blue fish





Shows and events

Punctually taking place in Castelvetro are: the Selinus theatre season; at Christmas, the living nativity scene, and the mechanical nativity scene, the *Ninnaredde*, ancient popular songs; in spring, the *Efebocortogiovani*, which involves many Italian schools; The “estate selinuntina”- “Selinunte summer”, with

shows, folkloristic events and classical plays at the archaeological park; the visits to the oil mills and the tasting of typical products, in particular the oil and olives in autumn. In the penultimate week of August, there is the *sardiata*, a big feast of blue fish, offered by fishermen, during the celebrations of the *Sacro Cuore di Maria* in

Marinella di Selinunte, which culminates in the suggestive evening sea procession of illuminated boats followed by splendid fireworks. During the occasion the Festival internazionale dei fuochi d'artificio - International fireworks festival takes place which, for four evenings, attracts a very large audience.

Fireworks Festival



Sacro Cuore di Maria Procession



Longer *cunzato* bread festival





Entertainment, sport and free time

The city has a municipal stadium, a sports centre and numerous gyms where different sports can be practiced (basketball, volleyball, handball, tambourine ball, badminton); it also has centres for five-a-side football and mini-golf, a bowls area and a horse-

riding centre. There is also a tennis club and a sailing club. In the town hamlet of Triscina there is a kart track and Marinella di Selinunte has two small tourist ports. Triscina with its 6 km of fine golden sand beaches, is a popular tourist destination, and also for scuba divers

who like to find sea urchins and explore the sea bed. The beached are equipped with bathing and entertainment stations and in the splendid sea aquatic sports can be practised. On Lake Trinità di Delia there is a private centre for canoeing, sailing and windsurfing.

Beach Sports



Regattas



Lake Trinità, equipped area





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