



Provincia di
Trapani

Paceco



Welcome





Paceco is...

An agricultural centre known in the past for a native variety of musk melon called "Cartucciaro", it offers the visitors one of the most attractive naturalistic areas in Europe, protected by the WWF: the *Riserva Naturale Orientata delle Saline di Trapani e Paceco* - Oriented Nature Reserve of the Salt Pans of Trapani

and Paceco, in which there is the Salt Museum. The neighbouring town hamlet of Nubia, which rose around an ancient watch tower, is famous for its salt production, its typical red garlic and its *pizzutello* tomato. Not far away is the Dattilo district, where it is possible to try the typical ricotta cheese *cannoli* and

see the Invitation to San Giuseppe (Saint Joseph) which takes place on the 19th of March with the offering of a meal to three people representing the Sacred Family, in front of a votive altar decorated with characteristic bread. The interesting library-museum holds a prominent selection of archaeological finds.

Cartucciaro Melon



Nubia, red garlic



RNO of the Salt pans





History

Inspiration for the name came from Maria Pacheco, granddaughter of a Spanish viceroy and wife of marquis Placido Fardella who founded the city in 1607 after becoming prince with the *jus populandi* allowed by Filippo III, King of Spain. Thus the strongholds and the areas near the village of Xitta, which

were by then abandoned were repopulated. It is thought that Paceco, from its perfect urban layout, was squared by the Spanish monarch, Sabellos who had built the new quarters of Madrid. The territory was frequented from prehistoric times as shown by the relics in the rocky caverns of the

Sciarrotta and Malummeri districts. The presence of the Arabs is shown by the names such as *Misiligiafari*, casale (hamlet) of the emire Giafar, and Nubia, from *nwb*, gold. Mino Blunda (XX century), author of radio dramas and theatre plays with a profound knowledge of the Sicilian soul was born in Paceco.

Malummeri



Placido Fardella



Misiligiafari Tower





Landscape

The landscape of the salt pans of Paceco connected also visually to those of Trapani, represents a unique example of extraordinary value built over time by the industry of the people of Trapani who were able to interpret natural resources, realising a perfect balance between economy and environment. From piazza

Vittorio Emanuele a visual cone opens up which intercepts the Castello della Colombaia which closes the southern part of the port of Trapani. Described by Gustavo Chiesi in *La Sicilia illustrata* of 1892: "the plain and green valley of Paceco, wheat cultivations and vines", today it presents itself the same way to the

visitor with its cultivations of vines, olive trees, garlic, tomatoes, and melon. Nubia is a very important area famous for its red garlic and for the *pizzutello* tomato. It is completely surrounded by salt pans down to the sea with views dotted with windmills, salt hills and ancient salt *bagli* (rural fortified structures).

RNO of the Salt pans



View from piazza Vittorio Emanuele



Castellaccio





Of noteworthy naturalistic importance is the Riserva Naturale Orientata delle Saline di Trapani e Paceco - Oriented Reserve of the Salt Pans of Trapani and Paceco, a large part of which falls inside the Paceco territory. Established by decree of the Regione Sicilia on the 11th of May 1995, it was given in management to the WWF. The site is one of the most important wetland areas along the coast of western Sicily due to its biological importance linked to the flora, fauna and vegetation present there. To this can be added the importance of the landscape, and also the ethno-anthropological architectural and historic

importance. The highly salty environment around the salt pans, is home to numerous herbaceous or shrubby species which have adapted to the extreme environmental conditions presented by this area. It is a Site of Community Importance (SCI), and is of particular interest for the biodiversity and is inserted as a ZPS (Zona a protezione speciale per gli uccelli) - (IBA- Important Bird Areas) as it is an area where birds stop during their migration towards Africa or vice versa. The system of pools is a succession of ecosystems. In the first pools, which are deeper and nearer the sea, fish are extensively bred and these often fall prey to

seagulls or cormorants. In the following pools, where the concentration of salt does not permit animal life, a microscopic single-celled algae, the *Dunaliella salina* grows which, helped by the archaea, when the concentration of the salt increases, colours the surface of the salt pan in coral red in the summer time. This is the favourite food of the *Artemia salina* a crustacean on which the flamingos feed, who get their pink colouring from the carotene made by these micro organisms East of the town, the artificial lake Baiata, used to irrigate terrains downstream, interacts positively with the migrating fauna.



Traditions

Following the path of an ancient tradition, in Paceco and the Dattilo town hamlet, the *U'mmitu di San Giuseppe*, takes place, consisting in a lunch with over one hundred courses, offered to three people, once poor people, representing the Sacred Family, in front of an altar decorated with symbolic bread, myrtle,

laurel, oranges, lemons and *curuneddi*, dishes with germinating seeds in cotton wool. This takes place according to a ritual which starts with the Saints knocking on the door looking for hospitality and continues with cries of *Viva Gesù, Giuseppe e Maria*. On the days before the 19th of March, there are fervent

preparations: the bread is made as are the altars with three or more levels covered with a white sheet, on which a picture of the sacred family is placed and three large loaves in the shape of *cucciddatu* (doughnut), palms and *vastuni* (sticks) alluding respectively to Baby Jesus, Mary and Joseph are put.

Altar of Saint Joseph

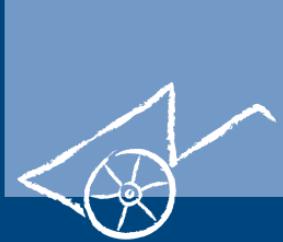


Altar of Saint Joseph, *cucciddatu*



Altar of Saint Joseph, loaves





The sea salt

Inside the Riserva Naturale Orientata delle Saline di Trapani e Paceco - Oriented Reserve of the Salt Pans of Trapani and Paceco the sea salt is made "with craftsmanship", according to the method of cultivation of leaving the sea water in large salting pools in winter to evaporate: the essential

elements are sea water, sun and wind. The production takes place in the summer period, in particular in the months of July, August and September and according to the climatic conditions, up to three harvests can take place. The salt worker harvests the salt by hand, helped by a few tools, and

it is then dried. In contrast to industrial salt, it is not washed and dried: it is just crushed into smaller grains and lightly dried to avoid an excessive level of humidity. The sea salt is natural, rich in iodine, fluoride, magnesium and potassium and can be defined as *integrale* - unrefined.

RNO of the Salt pans, pools



RNO of the Salt pans, piles of salt



RNO of the Salt pans, salt harvest







Archaeology

On the edge of the modern day town, in the Sciarrotta and Malummèri localities, there are rocky ravines, inhabited in the Palaeolithic and Neolithic ages, which are rich in lithic fragments in flint and ceramic finds, belonging to the so-called culture of Stentinello. A collection of these materials is to be found in the local County Library.

Archaeological surveys of the surface of the area of *timpone Castellaccio*, have brought to light the base of a Byzantine fortalice, which became *manzil arabo*, and was destroyed by the Angevin troops in 1314 during the siege of Trapani, during the aftermath of the Sicilian Vespers and which is spoken about by the historian

Pugnatore in his *Istoria*. The territory (Cipponeri district and other sites) is rich in the remains of farms from the late Roman Empire, highlighted during the research of the Kalat project. In the Pepoli Museum a small statue in terracotta depicting the Deity Bes, discovered at the end of the XIX century in the municipal territory.

Ceramic finds



Ceramic finds



Ceramic finds





Monuments

As in every city, the most important monuments are the churches, and above all the Mother Church founded in 1623, restructured in the mid XVIII century on the designs of the architect G.B. Amico, from Trapani, and completed in the 1950s. It is dedicated to Santa Caterina d'Alessandria, patron saint

of Paceco. The inside with a single nave is decorated with eighteenth century stuccoes and interesting altar pieces belonging to the Neopolitan school (end XVII - beg. XVIII century). Noteworthy is also the church of Maria Santissima del Rosario, with an interesting crypt containing the mummified remains of the bodies of the

brothers of the Santissimo Rosario - Holy Rosary who were based in the church and from the early seventeenth century were buried there as a plaque attests. On the Nubia coast rises a watchtower (XVI century), restructured in 1585 by Camillo Camilliani and included in the defence system of the Sicilian coast.

Mother Church



Maria del Rosario Church



Nubia, tower





Museums Science Education

The Municipal library is, with its collection of books, newspapers and the archives, a meeting place of the town for young and old. It has an interesting museum section with archaeological relics dating from the Palaeolithic age to medieval times. The *Laboratorio museale della civiltà Contadina* - Museum laboratory of

Country civilisation keeps a patrimony of manufactured articles, tools and objects all of which allow the reconstruction of the identity of the town through the history of the agri-pastoral culture, and show the techniques, and methods linked to the activities that took place in the fields, in the craft workshops or in

the family home. In the Reserve, there is the *Museo delle Saline* - Salt Pan Museum in the storeroom of a traditional windmill for the grinding of the salt which exhibits the work tools and illustrates the production techniques. A band association offers courses for wind instruments and percussion.

Museum of prehistoric civilization



Laboratory of country civilization



Salt Museum



Cannoli of Dattilo





Wine and food

In the dark and clayey earth around the salt pans, the red garlic is cultivated, a bulb with a very intense taste, made up of an average of 12 bulbs, with white peel and red insides. The production localised in the Nubia district is carried out according to ancient tradition, for the sowing, from December to the first half of February and for the harvest, at the beginning of June, in the cooler hours of night or early morning so that the leaves, being damp, allow the manual confection of plaits traditionally formed with a hundred heads on each one. Garlic is the most important ingredient of *pesto trapanese*, made of tomato,

garlic, basil and almonds: crushed together with a pestle and mortar and mixed with olive oil and served as a raw condiment for the *pasta cull'agghia* - Pasta with garlic. A typical lunch of the Paceco area is cod water soup of dried bread, tomatoes and *agghia pistata* (crushed garlic). Another typical product is the winter musk melon which is a type of melon which keeps for a long time: it is planted between March and April and after the harvest which takes place on June, it will keep until Christmas and later. The *cartucciaro* variety is an ancient elongated melon with curved extremities and

a smooth yellow skin; it is an excellent table fruit with white, juicy pulp which becomes even more flavoursome and sweet over time. In addition to the countryside produce, there is also cheese production: *tume*, *caciotte*, *pecorini* and *ricotta*, prepared following traditional methods by some companies. Typical dishes are the fat sausage *pasqualore*, the thirst-quenching *limuni cunsatu* a salad of lemons, salt, cold water and oil - the local one is one of the finest of the province - and the soup of *ciciri a burettu*, chick peas in broth. Exquisite and enormous *cannoli*, produced in Dattilo must also be tasted.



Shows and events

Pi Santa Lucia si mangia la cuccia - For Santa Maria the cuccia is eaten as recites a Sicilian proverb, *cuccia* is boiled wheat dressed with mulled wine, sugar, honey, ricotta or cream of milk: on the 13th of December Paceco dedicates a festival to this food, offering tastings of this ancient dish. At Carnevale (Mardi Gras)

enjoyment is assured by parades of wagons, people in fancy dress, and the recital in the square of satiric verses. In summer there is open air entertainment and on the first Sunday in August the *Rassegna Bandistica Provinciale*, a gathering of music bands and groups of majorettes takes place,

organised by a local band association, while at the end of September, the local cake and pastry makers hold a *dolce meeting*, accompanied by tastings, exhibitions and shows. The *Festival della chitarra classica* - Festival of the classic guitar and a competition for young soloists of classical music regularly take place.

Carneval



Rassegna Bandistica Provinciale



Dolce meeting





Entertainment, sport and free time

Paceco has a good sporting culture: football, volleyball, handball, athletics and judo clubs have been and are still active in the town. Tennis and basketball have been of particular importance in the past, and at present, a tennis club organises singles and doubles tournaments. The

town council has a sports centre where football, light athletics can be practised and an indoor gymnasium for basketball and volleyball with an excellent parquet and an enviable lighting system, thanks to which Paceco has been chosen for a round of the final phase of the national junior

championship, the most important basketball event after the division A championship. Another municipal football ground can be found in the town hamlet of Dattilo. Bowles, track events and basketball clubs are active in the town, in addition to an amateur club offering judo courses.

Sporting Facilities



Sporting Facilities





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Provincia Regionale
di Trapani

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