



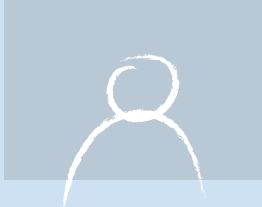
Provincia di  
**Trapani**

# Trapani



**Welcome**





## Trapani is...

**T**he ancient *Drepanon* in the shape of a sickle extends towards the sea, the main source of life for the fishing activity and for the tourist-commercial port (once a source of richness with the coral fishing). Passing through the historic centre, one can read the signs of the various cultural stratifications, from the oldest quarter, *Casalicchio*,

to the Jewish quarter of *Giudecca*, to the medieval ruins of the *Castello di Terra* - Land Castle, to the *Castello di Mare* - Castle of the sea, or of the *Colombaia*. In the main street, *palazzo Senatorio*, and *palazzo Riccio di San Gioacchino* are splendid. The Church of Purgatory which holds the *Misteri* (twenty sculptural groups depicting

the Passion of Christ), and Church of the Collegio are interesting. Not far away from the historic centre is the Sanctuary of the *Annunziata* and the *Pepoli* Museum, which holds precious jewels of art. South of the city, the Salt Pans are a unique environmental site from where the Salt Road itinerary begins.

Trapani and the islands



Colombaia castle



Salt pans







## History

The Greeks called it *Drepanon*, sickle, the Romans *Drepanum*; the Elymian-Punic origins saw it rise as the port of Erice and a fishing village. Around 260 B.C., Hamilcar Barca built the *castello di terra* - land castle, and one of the sea, which were the first strong points of the defensive system. Trapani, which over centuries has linked its history and economy to the

sea, due to the good position of the port which favoured commerce with Africa, assumed particular importance under the Arabs who were responsible for the origins of the most ancient urban fabric of the city. In 1286, James I of Aragon enlarged it and in 1535, Charles V, stopping in Trapani on his return from Tunis, had the walls lengthened towards

the west. It is the XIV out of the 27 cities decorated with the - gold medal as *Benemerita del Risorgimento nazionale* - Well deserving city of national Risorgimento and was the birth place of important people such as Leonardo Ximenes, astronomer and engineer, and Nunzio Nasi, minister of the post office and public instruction during the Giolitti government.

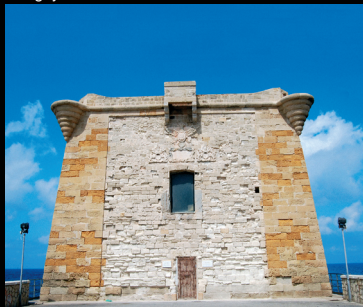
Municipal coat of arms



Bastione dell'Impossibile



Ligny tower





## Landscape

The landscape of Trapani amazes due to its extraordinary beauty. The configuration of the city, like a double sickle which extends into the sea almost dividing the Tyrrhenian from the Mediterranean sea, gave it its ancient name, *Drepanon*, originating from the myth in which Ceres, goddess of growing plants, lost the sickle that she was carrying right here, whilst desperately

searching for her kidnapped daughter Proserpina. The Egadi islands and the salt pans are spectacular, and act as a backdrop over the south-western sea in the morning at sunrise and at sunset, offering splendour and colour, which is especially moving in summer. Right here in this area of sea near the island of Favignana, the naval battle of 241 B.C. between the Romans and the Carthaginians took

place which marked the end of the domination of Carthage. The urban landscape has been improved over the last few years with operations which have given the city back its noble historic prestige with its merchant port, its tourist value and the recovery of the Northern city wall with the *Ossuna marina* and the *Bastione dell'Impossibile* (Bastion of the impossible) in front of the port.

Small port of Ossuna



Coastline



Salt pans





## Nature

Just outside the city there is the *Riserva Naturale Orientata delle Saline di Trapani e Paceco* - Nature Reserve of the Salt Pans of Trapani and Paceco, with pools for the cultivation of the salt. It is a *Sito di Interesse Comunitario* - Site of Community Importance (SCI), and is one of the most important wetland areas on the coast

of western Sicily for its biological values linked to the fauna and flora - vegetation 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. Inside the Reserve the sea salt is made in a traditional way according to

the method of cultivation of leaving the sea water, put into 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.

Black-winged stilt



*Calendula maritima*



*Salicornia fruticosa*







## Traditions

The patrimony of popular literature, characterised by a multitude of terms, expressions, sayings and dialectic proverbs is prominent; the marine gergo is particularly original with the unfailing references to boats and life on the sea. *Cu avi rinari, fa varchi e navi* - Those who have money make boats and ships recites an old proverb with evident

allusion to the rich man of Trapani who makes boats and ships. *Varca ch'addimura, veni carrica* - the boat that leaves late comes back with a full load - is an optimistic expression to wish good luck, as is *Si veni è varca e si resta è scoghiu* - if it comes it's a ship, if it stays it's a reef. There are also various idioms such as *Vinni u mari cu tutti pisci* - the sea sells

itself with all its fish, to indicate a violent storm which, with a strong current has thrown the fish ashore. *O funnu d'u mari niuru* - The black bed of the sea is an expression to exorcise the presumed threat of an impending danger. The songs of the salt workers and the tuna fishermen and the supplications to the Saints are also suggestive.

Fishing nets



Harvesting of the salt





## Religion Remembrance Bonds

**A**ugust is the month dedicated to patron saints: Sant'Alberto and the Madonna of Trapani, to whom, from the first of the month, the fortnight of prayer is dedicated, which sees thousands believers flock to the Sanctuary of the Annunziata. On the 6th the simulacrum of Sant'Alberto covered in silver (XVII

century), from the Sanctuary is transferred into the city where it stays for three days: on the 7th the solemn procession through the city streets accompanied by the invocation of the carriers and believers takes place: *Viva Maria e Santo Liberto*, a hymn of praise to the two patron saints of the city, repeated in loud voices above all by the

devote fishermen. The 16th of the month is dedicated to the *Madonna di Trapani* which, after the procession in the historic centre of a copy of the marble simulacrum, concludes with the traditional fireworks at midnight. The devotion towards San Francesco di Paola and Santa Lucia, is also heartfelt, above all by the fishermen.

Madonna of Trapani Procession



Madonna of Trapani Procession



Procession of Sant'Alberto





## Holy Week

Rites, processions, religious functions which unite faith, traditions and also folklore, characterise the week before Easter. Brief corteges of palms in the churches during Palm Sunday start the rites. On the Tuesday, the procession of the picture of the *Madonna Addolorata* - Our lady of Sorrows also known as the

*Madonna dei Massari* which, on the afternoon of the Wednesday, meets that of the *Madonna del Popolo*. On the Thursday in the churches, “*sepolcri*”, richly decorated altars which recall the Last Supper, are set up. But the most important moment is the suggestive and moving *Misteri* procession composed of eighteen statue groups,

made from wood, cloth and glue from the XVII and the XVIII centuries, recalling episodes from the passion of Christ, followed by *Gesù nell'urna* and by the statue of the *Addolorata* - Our lady of sorrow. Entrusted to the “*maestranze*” and carried on the shoulder, they parade from 14.00 on Good Friday until Saturday morning.

Madonna dei Massari



Misteri Procession



Misteri Procession







## Art

The religious buildings hold splendid works of art, in particular the Sanctuary of the Annunziata where *La Madonna di Trapani*, a splendid fourteenth century marble statue attributed to Nino Pisano and considered to be one of the best works of the artist, is venerated. An extremely sweet *Madonna degli Angeli* by Andrea della

Robbia, in glazed terracotta, decorates the church of Santa Maria del Gesù, while a singular *Crocefisso gotico doloroso* - painful Gothic crucifix is kept in the church of San Domenico which also has interesting frescoes from the XIV and XV centuries. In the cathedral the *Crocefissione*, a painting of Flemish character (XVIII century) is

worthy of attention as is the *Cristo Morto* in pietra incarnata, a particular type of local alabaster. In the church of the Jesuits the seventeenth century paintings by the Flemish Geronimo Gerardi, the stuccoes by Bartolomeo Sanseverino and the marble icon by Ignazio Marabitti from the XVIII century are interesting.

Sanctuary, Madonna of Trapani



San Domenico church, Crucifix



Cathedral, Crucifixion





## Monuments

The richness of the architectural patrimony which goes from the XIV to the XX century is represented by the fourteenth century *chiese di Sant'Agostino e di San Domenico* - churches of Sant'Agostino and San Domenico with characteristic Gothic-Chiaramontan rose windows, the splendid church of *Santa Maria del Gesù* in late Gothic form, the sixteenth century

*Giudecca*, in plateresque style, with towers decorated with pointed diamond shaped ashlar, the seventeenth century *palazzo Senatorio*, The Baroque *chiesa del Collegio dei Gesuiti* - church of the College of the Jesuits, internally decorated with magnificent stuccoes and polychromatic marble, the austere cathedral of San Lorenzo (XVII century), with a narthex by Giovanni

Biagio Amico from Trapani in front of it. No less significant is the *Santuario dell'Annunziata*, outside the city centre, with fourteenth century origins with a rose window on the main façade and interesting chapels from the XIV - XVI centuries, together with the connected ex Carmelite monastery now seat of "A. Pepoli" Regional Museum, with a splendid cloister.

Cathedral



Palazzo Senatorio



Pepoli Museum





## Museums Science Education

The Regional Museum “Pepoli” is a prestigious institution located in the ex-monastery of the *Padri Carmelitani* - Carmelite Fathers, and is one of the most emblematic of applied art which is characterised by the gathering of coral, gold, silver and majolica articles and nativity sculptures from the XVII and the XVIII

centuries. Named after its founder, Count Agostino Sieri Pepoli, it also has a collection of significant sculptures and pictures, including a *San Giacomo*, masterpiece by Antonello Gagini, a polyptych from the beginning of the XV century, a painting attributed to Tiziano. The Fardelliana Library is noted for its rich archive of manuscripts, the

newspaper library and the collection of works from the XVI, XVII and the XVIII centuries and for the ancient prints including incisions, by Piranesi. Prehistoric Material and finds from historic periods, above all of marine origin, are kept in the Museum of Prehistory and the Sea situated in the seventeenth century Ligny tower.

Pepoli Museum



Pepoli Museum



Fardella Library







## Typical produce

The typical produce is connected to the secular maritime vocation of the city; the local fishermen create, as in the past, fishing equipment, nets and *nasse*, traditional baskets for capturing fish which they cannot get out of once inside. In Trapani there are various shipyards specialized

in the construction of hulls in wood and iron of various tonnages which offer also products and services for navigation. There are also oenological companies, and fish conservation companies, along with companies which process salt. These activities are flanked by the traditional working of coral, an activity

which developed greatly in the XVII and XVIII centuries and made the city famous for its fine products. Some craftwork laboratories and specialist schools have re-launched the working techniques of the coral. Other artisans keep the traditional techniques of ceramics alive.

Working of the coral



Fishing nets



Shipyards





## Wine and food

**P**rotagonist of the gastronomy is fish, in its infinite varieties which is roast, fried, baked, a *ghiotta* (soup). A typical dish is the traditional *couscous* of Arab origin, made from bran which is steamed and which, in Trapani, is then dressed with fish broth; a real delicacy is mattanza tuna, perfect for

sauces, but also conserved in salt (*tunnina*), using all parts of the fish including the eggs (*bottarga*) and the interiors, treated opportunely. Other typical dishes are the pizza *rianata* (with oregano) and *pasta cu l'agghia* - pasta with garlic above all *busiati* (strips of pasta twisted by hand), dressed with a particular

*pesto* composed of tomato, garlic and basil. The confectionary of Trapani, which includes all the traditional Sicilian cakes and pastries, is characterised by the fried ricotta *cassatelle*, the *sfinigi* and the jasmine flavour water ice. The production of wine and oil is also noteworthy.

Cous cous



Tuna products



Cassatelle





## Shows and events

In the wake of the America's Cup which took place in Trapani in 2005, the city continues to hold important events linked to sailing and pleasure boating. A rich calendar of appointments proposes music, theatre, folklore, conferences, reviews, fairs and various shows all

through the year. The *Ente Luglio Musicale Trapanese* organizes from July to September at the Villa Margherita a summer season of operas, operettas and ballets with a rich cast of artists of international fame who perform on an open air stage, framed suggestively

by the age old trees; at the *Auditorium provinciale del Polo Universitario* (University Auditorium) there is a winter opera season and a prose season organised by the same body which in summer also promotes a cinematographic review at Villa Pepoli.

Luglio Musicale organisation



Couscous Day







## Entertainment, sport and free time

As is the rule for a seaside city, Trapani has a tourist port and is equipped with bathing stations along the sandy beach of the northern coastline. After the success of the America's Cup, societies and circles organise sailing courses, regattas, important international events and promote water sports. For free time, the city

offers entertainment and possibilities to practice sport. It has, in fact, municipal facilities like the *Palazzetto dello sport* (Indoor stadium) which also holds entertainment events, and concerts, football grounds, a swimming pool, which are flanked by private gyms, a C.O.N.I. (*Comitato Olimpico Nazionale Italiano*) field,

structures and clubs which promote the practice of various sporting disciplines, including tennis and basketball. At the provincial stadium, situated in the neighbouring municipality of Erice, athletics events also take place. There are also many pubs, wine cellars, wine bars for evening entertainment.

Water sports



CONI field





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Provincia Regionale  
di Trapani



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