The Italian spas

There is something deep and ancestral about them: water, earth, fire... echoes of the beginnings of civilization, heat, and color. They remind us of a time way back in history and, as in a circle connecting the past to the future, they are today seen as a very modern way to achieve good health and physical well-being. In Italy, staying at spa resorts is reminding us of those populations which made the Italian peninsula great in centuries gone by, discovered the benefits that spa-waters can give to the human body long ago. They learned to use their healing properties. Thus in Italy from the Alps to the sea, a never-ending chain of spa resorts emerged, where the ancient therapeutic powers of the waters join forces with new demands for wellbeing, against backdrops that have no equal in the world - from the silence of Alpine peaks to the explosion of colors on the coasts and the islands, among myriad towns and villages that tell of the history, the art and the traditions of Italy. The Italian spas: an extraordinary world where a new concept of healthy happy living takes shape, in the subtle, almost magical balance between the perfect functioning of the body and the serene clarity of the mind, in landscapes where living and breathing are a pleasure, and where leisure, sport and culture, enthusiasm and enjoyment blend in harmony to bring a new flavor to each new day.

From the Alps to the sea the rhythm of the north-west

Imagine looking down over the part of Italy that is surrounded by the grandeur of the Alps and faces downwards towards the wide expanse of the sea: Piemonte stretching out between the white mountains, the brown hills and the

farmland on the plain; Valle D’Aosta dazzled by the splendor of the Alpine peaks, Lombardia with its lakes and cities, and Liguria, both gentle and harsh. You might see a seething mass of men and women, roads, airports, railways, many gathering of people, thousands of opportunities. If it were music, this area would be a lively, syncopated rhythm. It is an area that includes some traditional and very well-known spa resorts: from Acqui to San Pellegrino, from Sirmione to Salice, and from Bormio to Saint-Vincent and Pigna. A stay at one of these spa-resorts can be combined with shopping in the big cities such as Milan, Turin, or Genoa, with cultural events, major exhibitions, and theatre-performances. Thanks to one of the world's most efficient networks of transport links, the spas in this part of Italy make an ideal destination for those who see physical well-being as a mixture of relaxation and intelligent enjoyment.

**VALLE D’AOSTA**

This is a region that is particularly popular with tourists from all over the world, where you can find a very beautiful and majestic choice of mountains in Europe; there are plenty of opportunities here for experiencing wonderful holidays at spa-resorts. The best-known resort is **Saint-Vincent**, a traditional holiday destination in both winter and summer; it is also famous for its casino, as well as for the many artistic and historical treasures to be found there. Just a few minutes away, to the east, there is a spring pouring out waters which are particularly rich in valuable minerals, bicarbonates and sulphates. It was discovered in 1770 by an abbot and naturalist called Perret, and this water immediately became famous for its therapeutic properties, particularly recommended for treating stomach, liver and intestinal illnesses. (Info: A.I.A.T., via Roma 62, 11027 Saint-Vincent tel. 0166 512239 - 0166 513149; fax 0166 511335).

www.regione.vda.it

**PIEMONTE**

Piemonte has for centuries been a land rich in water: rivers, mountain-torrents and waterfalls abound in the alpine valleys, lakes, both large and small, are a feature of its hills, and there is plenty of water on the plain, too. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that there are large numbers of spa-resorts in practically every province of Piemonte Spas are to be found particularity in the Cuneo area, and among the most famous are **Bagni di Vinadio** along the main road towards the Tenda Pass, **Terme di Lumia** in the Mondovi valley, **Terme di Valdieri** in the Borgo San Dalmazio area, south of Cuneo, **Garessio**, in the upper Tanaro valley and **Vicoforte**, the site of a sanctuary well known for its elliptical dome - the largest in the world (Info: I.A.T., piazza Boves, 12100 Cuneo, telefax 0171 693258). Two "historic" locations for spa holidays in Piemonte are situated at the northern edge of the region, a few kilometers from the Swiss border in Verbania province. These are **Bognanco**, in a green valley set deep in chestnut groves (Info: I.A.T., piazza Giannini 2, 28842 Bognanco, tel.-fax 0324 234127) and **Crodo**, along the road leading up from Domodossola towards the Simplon pass (Info: IAT., Località Bagni, 28862 Crodo, tel.-fax 0324 618831). In Asti province in the southern Monferrato area, there is **Agliano Terme**, a small town in the centre of an important wine growing area (Info: A.T.L piazza Alfieri 29, 14100 Asti, tel. 0141 530357, fax 0141 538200), while in the province of Turin, at **Castagneto Po**, there is a spa centre now being opened. The most popular spa resort in the whole of Piemonte is **Acqui Terme** - located in the part of the region around Alessandria, near towns such as Valenza (famous above all for its craftwork in gold) and Castelletto d’Orba. Acqui is the main town in the southern Monferrato, and is the central point of a real paradise for lovers of wonderful Piedmontese food and wine. It offers some
impressive sights and historical monuments but its fame has always rested on its healing spa-waters. The therapeutic properties of its waters were already well-known to the Romans, who founded the spa resort. These are salso-bromo-iodic waters, which, along with the features of the mud, are recommended for treating rheumatic, respiratory and articulation disorders, not forgetting its use as a medical and beauty treatment for face and body. There are numerous springs, ranging from tepid to hot, and the main one is surely the fountain in Piazza della Bollente, which has a temperature of 75 °C and an output of 560 liters per minute. Other springs can be found in the part of the city known as "Bagni", beyond the Bomida river. The Acqui area offers tourists the chance to encounter its famous cuisine, which is to be appreciated especially in autumn, when mushrooms and truffles abound, and is enhanced by the much prized wines from the hills (Info: IAI, via Ferraris 5,15011 Acqui Terme, tel. 0144 322142, fax 0144 329054; Ufficio Turismo del Comune di Acqui, tel. 0144 770240).

www.piemonteweb.it

LIGURIA  top
Liguria is famous throughout the world for its sea, which satisfies all tastes with the beaches along its coastline - sometimes sandy, sometimes pebbly, and sometimes rocky. The sea here is clean and transparent, welcoming and hospitable. Looking inland from this splendid coast, full of history and evocations of the past, there is the wonderful sight of the hinterland stretching out; you see it packed with the luxuriant beauties of nature - the intense, deep-green of the Alps and Apennines with the traditions and marvels of myriad villages exuding beauty right down to their very roots. Along with the limitless beauties of the sea and the numerous wonders of the hinterland, Liguria also offers tourists from all over the world the chance to combine a personalized healthcare and wellbeing program. First of all, it offers the benefits of the sea air and water, applied in what is known as thalassotherapy - a health cure that has been recognized since ancient times. But there are also more modern treatment to be found in Liguria, from beauty farms to wellness centre, which nave gradually come into being in the majority of seaside resorts on the Eastern and Western rivieras. However, one place that has been modeled on the typical pattern of the spa-resort is Pigna, just behind Ventimiglia in the upper Nervia valley in the Imperia province; this is an ideal place to regain one's state of well-being and treat oneself to a healthy, relaxing holiday. (Info: IAT-, via Cavour 61,18039 Ventimiglia, tel.-fax 0184 351183).

www.turismo.ligurianrete.it

LOMBARDIA  top
Lombardia has lots of spa resorts of a very high standard, scattered all over the area, from the north to the south. On the western edge of the region, we come at Bormio, in a valley surrounded by the peaks of the Alps and the Stelvio National Park, in the upper Valtellina. It is popular as a ski resort (there are dozens of pistes equipped with modern ski-lifts, and you can do summer skiing on the Stelvio glacier), an ever-popular tourist resort. It has been awarded the chance to stage the alpine skiing world championships in 2005. However, Bormio is also one of the most important and popular spa-centers in Lombardia. The medicinal properties of its waters have been acknowledged for centuries; they belong to the category of sulphate-bicarbonate-alkaline-earthy-radioactive waters and are suitable for treating various
health disorders: respiratory problems, ear, nose and throat disorders, illnesses of the digestive tract, locomotive organs disorders, skin disorders, gynecological problems and circulatory problems. The Bormio spa complex also offers users a large number of programs for wellbeing and beauty treatments. There's plenty of opportunity for sport in your free time: in winter, on the splendid ski slopes and in summer. with golf, tennis and walking, in a resort with first class tourist facilities (Info: I.A.T., via Roma 131b, 23032 Bormio, tel. 0342 903300, fax 0342 904696). West of Sondrio, at the top of the Valmasino, a charming little lateral valley in the Valtellina, there is another beautiful spa resort set deep in wonderful surroundings of quiet unpolluted countryside. This is Bagni del Masino: its reputation has remained unchanged for centuries, testifying to the effectiveness of the Masino spa-waters in curing illnesses of the digestive tract, the kidneys and the urinary tract, as well as treating skin problems and gynaecological problems (Info: A.P.T., via Trieste 12,23100 Sondrio, tel. 0342 512500).

Brescia province, with its wide valleys and the Lombard shore of Lake Garda, has lots of spa-resorts. Angolo Terme, in the green Scalve valley, is a holiday and treatment centre and it has a very mild climate - airy in summer and sheltered from cold winds in winter. The waters of Angolo are recommended for disorders of the digestive tract and gastric problems, for the liver, bile duets and urinary tract as well as for some metabolism disorders. The respiratory system is treated with inhalation treatment and mud packs are used to treat locomotive disorders (Info: Pro Loco, piazza degli Alpini 2, 25040 Angolo Terme, tel. 0364 548661). Just a few kilometers from Angolo, where the Scalve valley comes out into the lower Valcamonica, there is Dario Boario Terme. This resort is famous in Italy and in Europe for the effectiveness of its spa and mineral waters, and for its buildings which hark back to the ancient settlements of that mysterious Alpine population known as the Camuni (the National Park of Rock engravings at Capodiponte is around 20 km from Boario). It is splendidly positioned in a framework of wide stretches of woodland crossed by the Oglio river, and offers a large number of possibilities for outdoor leisure, culture and entertainment, it has been well-known since the 16th century as a tourist and health resort, and it was famous beyond regional and national borders as early as the middle of the 19th century. Its sporting facilities are modem and well-equipped, and it has interesting cultural programs and initiatives for events and entertainment. It is the spa-waters, however, which are Boario’s real treasure. They pour out from four different springs and are classified as sulphate-calcium. For a long time, the Boario Spa has been recommended as an excellent treatment centre for liver and bile-duct disorders, gastric problems, diverticulosis, stipsis, calculosis of the urinary tract and gout. There is also a wide range of beauty treatments and relaxation and wellness programs (Info: I.A.T., piazza Einaudi 2, 25047 Darfo Boario Terme, tel. 0364 531609. fax 0364 532280). On the southern shore of Lake Garda, still in the Brescia area, there is another resort of great international fame and great tourist appeal: this is Sirmione. It is located on a narrow isthmus of four kilometers, dividing the gulf of Desenzano from that of Peschiera. Sirmione is fortunate in having a beautiful, natural setting, and this made it a popular place to settle right back in ancient times. It was, in fact, frequented by Roman patricians who built splendid villas there, and you can see interesting archaeological remains of these today. Sirmione's activity as a spa town dates back for many centuries: the existence of a source with therapeutic properties was discovered in the 16th century, but the real boom in spa activity came at the end of the nineteenth century, when they succeeded in channeling the waters of the most important spring -the Boiola. The Sirmione water is popular because of its special curative properties: it is particularly rich in sulphur, bromide and iodine - elements that perform an anti-inflammatory and anti-bacterial action. For leisure,
Sirmione offers the tourist all that he can possibly want in the area of tourist and sports facilities: golf, tennis, yachting, cycle-touring, and sailing on the lake. And there is also entertainment for the children in the nearby Gardaland amusement park, as well as the possibility of a real journey back in time, with a visit to the Catullo Caves archaeological area. (Info: I.A.T., viale Marconi 2, 25019 Sirmione, tel. 030 916114, fax 030 916222). Still in the Brescia province, there are the little resorts of Ome, in Franciacorta, just a few kilometers from Brescia itself, and Vallio Terme, also in the Brescia area. Other spa resorts of significance are to be found in the Bergamo province: Gaverina Terme in Val Cavallina, Sant’Omobono Imagna, between Bergamo and Lecco, San Pellegrino Terme and Trescore Balneario. San Pellegrino Terme, in the Brebbana valley, has had its history shaped, in the true sense of the word, by spa tourism. Its springs have been well-known since the 13th century and have always attracted visitors, ever since ancient times, when hordes of people went there, especially from Venice, to "take the waters". The first thermal baths, which started the modern development of the holiday resort, were built in 1840, but a great transformation took place at the beginning of the 20th century, giving the town its present elegant, high-class appearance characterized by its unmistakable Liberty style (the Grand Hotel, the Palazzo della Fonte and the Casino). The San Pellegrino spring waters are particularly effective in treating uricemia and renal calculosis, stomach and intestinal disorders, and they are also useful in therapy for chronic locomotive organs problems, for me respiratory tract and gynecological problems (Info: I.A.T., viale Papa Giovanni XXII118,24016 San Pellegrino Terme, tel. 0345 21020, fax 0345 23344). Trescore Balneario is situated in Val Cavallina, which one passes through to get from Bergamo to the Iseo lake and the Valcamonica. It is both a summer and a winter tourist resort, located in a panoramic position with a mild climate that is much appreciated: the spas are, in fact, what draws the tourists to this resort, and go back to very ancient times. The Trescore waters were known about in the Middle Ages, and the very first spa-centre was divided into two distinct parts, which were then linked up. Accounts tell us that it was Bartolomeo Colleoni, a condottiero in the Venetian army, who rebuilt the baths in the fifteenth century and these were then enlarged in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The waters of the Trescore Balneario springs are some of the richest in Italy in hydrogen sulphide. For this reason, they are also particularly recommended for the treatment and prevention of illnesses of the respiratory tract, of the ear and of the first airways. Specific treatments are also carried out for osteoarticular, skin and female genital problems (Info: A.P.T. Bergamo, viale Vittorio Emanuele II 20, 24121 Bergamo, tel. 035 13185, fax 035 230184). There are some very important spa resorts also in the more southern part of Lombardia, and in particular in Pavia province, where one can enjoy a healthy holiday between the green countryside of the Po Plain and the beginning of the upland area. Salice Terme is one of these: its healing properties were recognized and appreciated by the Romans, and it is a spa resort par excellence, which has existed for centuries, and where the waters were scientifically acknowledged back in the middle of the 19th century. Salice Terme is one of the historic spa-resorts in Italy and one of the most modern in terms of the facilities and services it offers. The town welcomes tourists with its quiet tree-lined streets and its buildings that blend in with the natural environment, and its baths are
situated right next to an age-old park (160,000 square meters). The Salice waters are very rich in active mineral ingredients with excellent healing properties. Beauty treatments and relaxation and wellbeing programs are also provided (Info: I.A.T., via Marconi 20, 27056 Salice Terme, tel. 0383 91207, fax 0383 944540). Another resort in the Pavia area is Rivanazzano, at the lower end of the Staffora valley, just a few kilometers from Salice. This area to the south of the Po river is called the Oltrepò and is famous for its wines: back in the nineteenth century, it was known as "Milan's wine-cellar" and it has today become a wine growing region of great significance in the top category of Italian wine production. The spa waters in the resort of Rivanazzano, known ever since ancient times, started to be exploited at the end of the nineteenth century. They are recommended for disorders of the respiratory tract, and arthro-rheumatic, dermatological and gynecological complaints. The Rivanazzano Spa specialises in treating rhinogenous deafness (Info: A.P.T., via Filzi 2, 27100 Pavia, tel. 0382 22156, fax 0382 32221). Still in the Pavia province, there is Miradolo Terme. Miradolo is a small but well-known spa resort set amongst vineyards and hazel groves, in an area studded with villas and castles. Its waters are rich in magnesium and are especially suitable for treating disorders of the digestive tract (Info: A.P.T., via Filzi 2, 27100 Pavia, tel. 0382 22156, fax 0382 32221). Finally, mention must be made of the San Colombano al Lambro spa resort, in the Milan province.

The charm of Venice and the roots of Mitteleuropa

A piece of Central Europe, the incomparable scenery of the Dolomites... and Venice. A stay at the spa towns of North-east Italy is like a dream come true. There are famous spa resorts such as Abano, Cornano, Recoaro, Levico, Aita Terme, Ugnano and Merano (offering the excellent therapeutic properties of their waters and wide-ranging programs for fitness and relaxation) and an infinite number of things to do and see: the spectacle of the Trentino and Alto Adige mountains, an evening with Verdi or Puccini at the Arena in Verona, a tour around the villas of the Veneto, a romantic gondola ride in Venice, the best-loved city in the world, with the memories of its glorious past making plays of light and shade through its narrow lanes and little squares and casting a golden reflection over the sea as it winds among the bright, shining palaces. You can listen to echoes of great European culture, from Joyce to Svevo, take a walk around old Trieste, in the Friuli region - Italy's gateway to the East. If physical fitness also means eating good food, the north-east of Italy is sure to surprise you with the inventions of its age-old cuisine and its amazing wines, to be found in hundreds of towns and villages from the mountains to the Adriatic sea.

Veneto

The "new frontier" of Italian development runs through here, the north-east, and through the Veneto region in particular. An intense economic movement, which includes the development of the tourist industry. This industry is an integral part of the network of spa resorts and visitors come in search of good health to the several large resorts in Veneto. Abano Terme, in the Padua province, is considered one of the major spa-resorts in Europe. The town has dozens of facilities and welcomes 250,000 guests annually. What attracts such a great number of tourists here is the
almost unique feature of the therapeutic components for which the town is famous: mud and spa-water. The healing springs have been well-known and exploited since Roman times and originate in the rainy precipitation on the Lessini mountains above Verona. During its long passage underground, the water is enriched with dozens of different mineral salts and its temperature increases to as high as 80-90 °C. The chemical composition of the waters is fundamental at the moment when they are added to the mud to produce a very unusual vegetable and animal microflora. At this point, the mud is ready to carry out its therapeutic action in treating rheumatic illnesses, osteoarthritis, pains in the joints, the after-effects of injuries and fractures, as well as in problems of the respiratory tract which the water, sprayed from an aerosol or inhaled, can help to combat. A visit to Padua, only 11 kilometers away, is not to be missed (Info: A.P.T.. via Pietro d’Abano 18, 35031 Abano Terme, tel. 049 8669055, fax 049 8669053). In the same area, near Abano with good road network and Transportation links, is Montegrotto Terme. Here too, the cures are based on the use of the waters and the mud. The mud is taken from the Colli Euganei area, and is allowed to mature in special vats where it stays in contact with the spa water until the process is finished. The effectiveness of treating rheumatic illnesses with hot baths and mud has been confirmed scientifically on the basis of careful clinical research. Montegrotto also has excellent facilities for sport and leisure, along with cultural and artistic attractions (Info: I.A.T., viale Stazione 60, 35036 Montegrotto Terme, tel. 049 793384, fax 049 8669053). Other places worthy of note, still in the Colli Euganei area, are Battaglia Terme, another resort that is well-known for mud treatments for locomotive disorders (Info: I.A.T., viale Stazione 60, 35036 Montegrotto Terme, tel. 049 793384, fax 049 8669053), Bibione, which, together with mud-treatments, also offers the benefits of a coastal climate and an unforgettable holiday thanks to its well-equipped beaches, with their long tradition of hospitality (Info: A.P.T., via Maja 37, 30020 Bibione, tel. 0431 442111, fax 0431 439997), and Recoaro, in the Vicenza area - famous for its mineral waters that are especially useful for treating liver, bile-duct and digestive tract complaints. The aristocracy and the middle classes came to this resort to "take the waters" right back in the nineteenth century (Info: I.A.T., via Roma 25, 36076 Recoaro Terme, tel. 0445 75070, fax 0445 75158). Other spa-resorts are Calalzo di Cadore, Galzignano, Jesolo, Lazise and Salzano.

www.veneto.to

Trentino-Alto Adige

Good health and fitness are also to be found in the Italian spas located among the wonderful peaks of the Trentino Alto Adige Alps - and these spas have absolutely unique features. The town of Merano, for instance, is like a Mediterranean island in the heart of the Alps. Temperatures in winter rarely drop below zero; the valley is very sunny, mere is very little rain, little wind and it is hardly ever foggy. In summer, the large numbers of green areas offer relief during the hottest days. The environment is ideal to spend a restful holiday getting into good physical shape, looking after oneself and one's health. The most famous Italian "health farms" are situated in Merano and its surrounding area. The spa centre was constructed in 1907 (it is today being enlarged and restored on extremity modem fines): at the outbreak of the first world war, the Liberty-style building brought Merano considerable fame in the Austro-Hungarian empire as an important centre for treatment. The Merano waters are cold and oligomineral, radioactive and fluorinated, and have excellent healing properties for

http://www.italiantourism.com/spas5.html
arthro-rheumatic disorders, chronic inflammatory diseases

of the respiratory tract, gynecological problems and chronic vein disorders (Info: A.P.T., corso Libertà 35, 39012 Merano, tel. 0473 25223). Another major spa in the Trentino region is to be found in the delightful Valsugana area: this is Levico-Vetriolo. This spa has a valuable, natural ally in its famous arsenical-ferruginous waters whose beneficial properties were recognized way back in the 16th century; they are unique in Europe because of their high concentration of iron and arsenic salts and provide an effective cure for anxiety, stress and nervous diseases. The Levico and Vetriolo waters are also recommended for disorders of the respiratory tract rheumatism, thyroid and gynecological problems, blood and skin complaints. Apart from baths, mud-baths, irrigations, inhalation treatments and physiotherapy, the resort offers shiatsu massage and innovative programs aimed at recovering vital energy and psychophysical well-being. The two resorts are located at different altitudes; Levico at around 500 meters, and Vetriolo at 1500 meters (Info: A.P.T., viale Vittorio Emanuele 3, 38056 Levico Terme, tel. 0461 706101, fax 0461 706004). Just a short distance from Trento, in a climate not unlike that of the Dolomite resorts, treatments at Cornano Terme are devoted mainly to curing skin and respiratory tract diseases, exploiting the bicarbonate-calcium-magnesium content of the water (Info: A.P.T., via Battisti 38d, 38077 Ponte Arche, tel. 0465 702626, fax 0465 702281), while at Pejo, in the Val di Sole, the therapeutic properties of the ferruginous and highly carbonic mineral water have an excellent effect on anemia and gastro-enteric diseases, and are combined with some interesting programs for fitness and relaxing holidays. (Info: IAT., via delle Acque Acidule 8, 38020 Pejo, tel. 0463 3753100, fax 0463 753180).

In the Stelvio National Park, there is Bagni di Rabbi, whose bicarbonate-alkaline waters, used in the eighteenth century by the Empress Maria of Austria, are recommended for treating disorders of the circulatory tract and osteo-articular and muscular problems. Also worthy of note are the resorts of Fiè allo Sciliar, Garniga Terme and Roncegno.

Friuli-Venezia Giulia top

Friuli-Venezia Giulia is a land of contrasts - a region belonging to Central Europe and a cosmopolitan area, a crossroads of different races and cultures. Friuli is the furthest strip of Italy stretching out towards the East, and a bridge between Europe and the Balkans, and it is a composite region also from the morphological point of view. Going just a few kilometers over the regional border, we come to the northern part of the Adriatic, with well-equipped beaches and charming corners, towns, hills and Alpine peaks. From the mountains to the sea, from west to east, the distances, as the crow flies, are less than a hundred kilometers and a modern motorway network enable them to be
covered easily. In this restricted space, Friuli-Venezia Giulia contains a great variety of environments, landscapes, history, art and culture, which come together to form a diverse, many-sided and complex whole. It is a region that offers myriad opportunities for the tourist, for holidays or for a period of treatment or relaxation. The best-known spa resort in Friuli-Venezia Giulia is **Arta Terme**, in the Udine province, in the heart of the Lamia region. This centre is made up of eight villages, where there is a source of sulphurous water, particularly useful for treating respiratory and skin problems (Info: A.P.T.. via Umberto 115, 33022 Arto Terme, tel. 0433 929290, fax 0433 92104). The baths at **Grado** (Info: A.P.T., viale Dante 72, 34073 Grado, tel. 0431 8991, fax 0431 899278) and **Lignano Sabbiadoro** (Info: A.P.T., via Latisana 42, 33054 Ugnano Sabbiadoro, tel. 0431 71821, fax 0431 70449) are of a completely different kind; these are well-known spa centers on the Adriatic coast, where they carry out thalassotherapy (sea-water bathing) and sand-baths, recommended for locomotive illnesses or the after-effects of injury. Therapeutic treatments are here fitted into very charming holiday surroundings, on the edge of beautiful lagoons and in an area which has splendid facilities for welcoming tourists.

**The heart of Italy, throbbing with history**

The great history of the Roman empire and the Renaissance is a remarkable journey that has left evidence of a civilization without equal in the world: ancient and Christian Rome, Florence. Toscana and Umbria, repositories of works of art. Here is a feast for the eyes and the heart, a few kilometers from the plains of the Emilia Romagna region, from the hills and mountains of the Marche, Abruzzo and Molise, and from the beaches to the east and west along the Adriatic (with the Romagna region) and the Tyrrhenian coasts, in an area of spas which includes some of the best-known Italian spa-resorts in the world, such as Salsomaggiore, Tabiano, Castrocaro, Montecatini, Chianciano and Fiuggi, along with other centers like Montegrimano, San Gemini and Caramanico. A holiday in this corner of Italy offers opportunities for combining spa treatments with visits to the most famous cities of art in the world, their sights and museums, their works of history and their artistic masterpieces, and an infinite number of cultural events and entertainment. Water for the body, and water for the mind to drink, to achieve truly overall fitness.

**Emilia Romagna**

Along a lovely stretch of road cutting through Emilia Romagna from north-west to south-east we come across one area after another offering a multitude of spa resorts, which abound in this region. Starting with Piacenza province, there is **Bobbio**, an ancient town that grew up around the famous abbey founded in 614 by St. Colombano. The spas here use salso-sulphurous water with a strong hydrogen-sulphide component, used to treat skin and respiratory tract diseases and vein disorders. Several significant resorts are concentrated in the Parma area. One of the most famous is **Salsomaggiore**, a settlement dating bade to the time of the Romans, who were the first to use the waters, not so much for therapeutic purposes, but to obtain the salt from it. The town's spa activity originated in the second half of the nineteenth century when the healing properties of the salso-bromo-iodic waters were officially recognized; they are recommended for chronic locomotive, gynecological, respiratory and peripheral circulation disorders. This new activity as a spa town gave a great boost to tourism, so that Salsomaggiore was numbered among the most beautiful and most important "watering places" in Europe, both for the extraordinary quality of its waters and the clientele who came to its hotels. Today, Salsomaggiore is a spa resort of
European renowned, elegant and refined, with pump-room buildings that are the very model for Italian spas such as the famous Berzieri Baths, with their characteristic Liberty architecture. Wellbeing of body and mind is guaranteed (Info: IAT., viale Romagnosi 7, 43039 Salsomaggiore Terme, tel. 0524 580211, fax 0524 580219). Just four kilometers from Salsomaggiore, at Tabiano, a strongly mineralized, sulphurous-sulphate-calcium-magnesium cold spring gushes art, with a high content of bicarbonates and a very high content of hydrogen sulphate. The Tabiano spa officially came into being in 1841 by the desire of Duchess Marie-Louise of Austria. She was an expert connoisseur of spa waters, and, because of her delicate health, she and her family used to go to the most fashionable watering places. This area of spas is situated in the middle of the Parma countryside, a short distance from Busseto, the birthplace of Giuseppe Verdi (Info: I.A.T. viale Fidenza 20, 43039 Salsomaggiore Terme, tel. 0524 565482, fax 0524 567533). Going south west down the Apennine ridge of Toscana and Emilia, we come to Monticelli. This is an ideal base for visiting the castles of the Parma area - places associated with Verdi and the lands of Matilde di Canossa. The Monticelli baths are set deep in a large park of conifers, an oasis of tranquility and well-being. There are two types of springs: salso-bromo-iodic water and sulphurous water. The first spring, with its strong saline concentration giving it relaxing properties, is used at a temperature of 36-38 °C for baths, mud-baths, inhalations and aerosol, irrigations, and in the spa pools with hydro massage. The sulphurous water is used for inhalations atomizing and for treating rhinogenous deafness (info: IAT., via delle Terme, 43023 Monticelli Terme, tel.-fax 0521 657519). We leave the province of Parma - but not without mentioning the spa resort of Sant'Andrea Bagni - and go through the Modena province, where the resort of Sassuolo is worthy of note, and then come into the Bologna area. One of the most important spa resorts here is Bologna itself. The city is unique in its talent for welcoming visitors to it, a metropolis of culture and high quality of life Bologna today stands out as the rich, modern capital of the Emilia Romagna region. The discovery of the presence of sulphurous waters goes back to the times of the Roman emperor Augustus, who had the first thermae built at the foot of St Luke's hill, on which stands the sanctuary that is the city's symbol (Info: IAT-, piazza Maggiore 6, 40126 Bologna, tel. 051 239660, fax 051 23454). The two best-known spas in the province, however are Castel San Pietro Terme and Porretta Terme, which offer the delights of a spa holiday at any time of the year. Castel San Pietro is situated little more than twenty kilometers from Bologna, along the road to Imola. Its history is linked to an episode in the fourteenth century when it was the temporary seat of Bologna University, which was subject to a papal interdict. It was at this time that the therapeutic properties of its waters were discovered. Legend has it that during an epidemic among flocks of livestock, some animals drank at a local spring and were cured of their infection. The water is used to treat all chronic inflammatory diseases of the respiratory tract, as well as arthro-rheumatic and gynecological disorders. The salso-bromo-iodic waters are also by far the most recommended for motory rehabilitation (Info: Pro Loco, piazza XX settembre 3, 40024 Castel San Pietro Terme, tel. 051 941247, fax 051 944423). The Porretta spa, 400 meters in altitude in the Apennines of Toscana-Emilia, where the Rio Maggiore flows into the Reno river, is one of the most famous in Italy and in Europe, because of the excellent therapeutic properties of its waters (especially recommended for the treatment, prevention and rehabilitation of the respiratory tract, locomotive disorders and the peripheral vascular system), and because of its charming, natural surroundings and, which are rich in tradition and culture, and offer delightful holidays (Info: I AI. piazza Libertà 11, 40046 Porretta Terme, tel. 0534 22021, fax 0534 424472). There are plenty of spa resorts in Romagna, too. Bagno di Romagna, for example, situated on the Apennine mountains, is surrounded by the National Park of the Casentinese Forests, Monte Fallerona and Campigna. You can breathe in the balmy air, perfumed by the nearby woods and pure like the water that comes down from here to the Romagna riviera.
The baths are a small miracle of nature. The meteoric water has been flowing underground for 450 to 650 years, heated by geothermal effect and picking up minerals that it obtains from the layers of rock it flows over. Enriched with the health benefits that these give, the water is recommended for treating disorders of the upper and lower respiratory tracts, for rhinogenous deafness, and for urinary tract locomotive and female gynecological complaints (Info: IAT, via Fiorentina 38, 47021 Bagno di Romagna, tel. 0543 911046, fax 0543 911026). Another resort of significance inland in the Romagna region is **Castrocaro**. It was already well-known in Roman times by the name of **Salsubium** (i.e. "a place rich in salt waters") and developed over time around its spa, which is set in the middle of a park stretching over thirty hectares. The sulphurous waters and the natural, salso-bromo-iodic muds of Castrocaro Terme are acknowledged all over Europe for their great effectiveness: both waters and muds are used to treat female sterility, peripheral venous circulation disorders, arthritic complaints, the after-effects of fractures and osteo-articular injuries, and respiratory tract and skin disorders (INFO: IAI, via Garibaldi 1, 47011 Castrocaro Terme, tel. 0543 767162, fax 0543 769326). Other beautiful spa resorts that deserve a mention are **Riolo**, in the fascinating countryside of the lower Senio valley, where the baths also have a centre specializing in treating illnesses of the ear, nose and throat (Info: I.A.T., via Moro 2, 48025 Riolo Bagni, tel. 0546 71044, fax 0546 71932), **Brisighella**, in the Lamone river valley, with waters that are used in inhalation treatments for respiratory tract and middle ear problems (Info: I.A.T., piazzetta Porta Gabolo 5, 48013 Brisighella, tel.-fax 0546 81166), **Fratta Terme** in Bertinoro, right in the heart of the Romagna region (Info: I.A.T. via Loreta 1, 47032 Bertinoro, tel. 0543 460828), and we arrive at the resorts on the Adriatic coast - an area of entertainment both for young people and families, where holidays and spa cures combine into a harmonious whole. This is true in **Cervia** and in **Punta Marina**, in the Ravenna area, very near the San Vitale pine-forest, in **Rimini**, which specializes in sea water, sun and sand therapies, and in **Riccione**. This town was popular with the Romans, and then developed further in the Middle Ages. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Riccione gained international fame, first of all as a tourist centre, and then as a spa centre, uniting the joys of the beach with the healing properties of the sulphurous-bromo-iodic waters that spring from tour sources situated in a pine forest just a few yards from the sea. Alongside the actual baths (which supplement the myriad opportunities for fun and entertainment in an area that is one of the best equipped in the world), there are highly popular beauty, fitness and relaxation programs in Riccione (Info: IAT, piazzale Ceccarini 10, 47036 Riccione, tel. 0541 693302, fax 0541 605752).

**www.emiliaromagnaturismo.it**

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**Toscana**

It is in the province of Siena, in the corner of Toscana between the Chiana and the Orcia valley, that the largest number of spa resorts in this region is concentrated. One of the best known resorts is **Chianciano**, known to Etruscans and rediscovered at the end of the eighteenth century, when Grand-Duke Peter Leopold of Toscana decided to put up large sums of money to build a real thermal baths. The Chianciano waters spring out of four different sources with different mineral contents. There are, therefore, various therapeutic applications for these, although the treatments that have made Chianciano famous throughout the world are the mineral water cures for liver complaints. Traditional spa therapies, carried out in wonderful parks rich in Mediterranean vegetation, are today accompanied by a wide range of beauty and psycho-physical fitness programs (Info: A.P.T, piazza Italia 67, 53042)
Chianciano Terme, tei. 0578 63648, fax 0578 63277. At Sant'Albino, just three kilometers from Chianciano in a setting of enormous interest from the point of view of culture and landscape, there is the Montepulciano spa, which uses the healing properties of water and mud that were discovered centuries ago. They are particularly recommended for various respiratory and ear, nose and throat disorders, and problems of the gynecological nature and the skin (Info: A.P.T. piazza Italia 67, 53042 Chianciano Terme, tel. 0578 63648, fax 0578 63277). A little further south, 20 kilometers from Chiusi and 27 from Chianciano Terme, we come to San Casciano Bagni, a picturesque town in a panoramic position on the slopes of the Cetona mountain. San Casciano is situated among woods of oak and chestnut trees, and the visitor can see all the traces of its medieval origins. In this charming framework, 42 springs gush out, rich in sulphate-calcium-magnesium-fluoride mineral salts, which began to be exploited right back in the Middle Ages for therapeutic purposes. Today, you can have a holiday here and keep fit with the mud-treatments available for rheumatic and articulation problems, and the therapies for the respiratory tract and for dermatological problems. Disorders of the urinary and digestive tracts are also treated (Info: A.P.T., piazza Italia 67, 53042 Chianciano Terme, tel. 0578 63648, fax 0578 63277). Other important resorts in this area are Bagno Vignoni, an age-old town on a plateau 300 meters up, very popular in ancient times and then again in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance as a hearth resort, frequented by historical figures such as Saint Catherine of Siena and Lorenzo the Magnificent; there are also Bagni di Petriolo, Bagni San Filippo, Radicondoli, Rapalano Terme and Sarteano. These are not all that Toscana has to offer for spa holidays, however. We should, first of all, remember Montecatini Terme, 15 kilometers from Pistoia, one of the European spa capitals, with its spa area covering 460,000 square meters and its seven treatment baths. The beneficial properties of the Montecatini spa waters have been sought-after since ancient times; they received official acknowledgement at the beginning of the fifteenth century and became popular at the time of Grand Duke Leopold I. The spa waters come from a layer of water located at a depth of 60-80 meters. During its journey to the surface, it picks up mineral salts and emerges on the surface bacteriologically pure; it can therefore be used without any treatment. Its therapeutic applications are very wide: the main therapy consists of actually drinking the waters, but mud therapy, balneotherapy, hydromassage, physiokinesitherapy in a thermal pool and rehabilitation therapy are also carried out. In addition, the Montecatini waters are used for beauty treatment for the body and for general psychophysical well-being (Info: Terme di Montecatini, viale Verdi 66, 51016 Montecatini Terme, tel. 0572 772244, fax 0572 70109). Among the other Toscana's spa resorts, Artagnana, Equi Terme, Massa and Montagnoso are worth a mention. They are located in the Massa Carrara province, in the middle of the area of Versilia - an area sheltered by the Apuan Alps. They combine the therapeutic properties of the water, recommended especially for problems of arthrosis and rheumatism, with the typical possibilities for bathing in the nearby beaches.
on the Tyrrhenian coast (Info: A.P.T., via del Freo, 54030 Cinquale, tel. 0585 808751). The sea in Toscana is an attraction that is difficult to resist Versilia is the best-known stretch of coastline with its 20 kilometers of beaches and its top-class events (from the Carnival in Viareggio to the Puccini Opera Festival at Torre del Lago). In the Livorno area, apart from Venturina, we should mention the spa at Portoferai, on the island of Elba, well-known for the use of a sea mud with features very similar to those of the Black Sea, applied together with seaweed and sea water in special therapies for rheumatic disorders (Info: A.P.T., Calata Italia 26, 57037 Portoferai, tel. 0565 914671, fax 0565 916350). In Pisa province, there is a delightful resort famous for its spa-tourism: Casciana Terme, highly recommended for illnesses of the cardio-circulatory system, of the lower limbs and diseases of the arteries (Info: Pro Loco, piazza Garibaldi 9, 56034 Casciana Terme, tel. 0587 644608). In the Pistoia province, there is the resort of Monsummano Terme, in Valdinievole, famous for its spa treatment in caves, particularly recommended for disorders of the respiratory and osteoarticular systems (Info: A.P.T., viale Verdi 66, 51016 Montecatini Terme, tel. 0572 772244, fax 0572 70109). In the Grosseto province, in Southern Toscana, we come to Saturnia, a spa resort situated in a splendid natural setting in the middle of the Grosseto Maremma area. With its sulphurous waters, this spa specializes in treating respiratory illnesses (Info: Consorzio l’Altra Maremma, piazza Vittorio Veneto 8, 58050 Saturnia, tel. 0564 601280, fax 0564 601257). To complete the panorama, there are the resorts of Gambassi and Impruneta in the area around Florence, Stia in the Arezzo province, San Giuliano Terme in the Pisa area and Bagli di Lucca in the province of Lucca.

www.regione.toscana.it

**Marche**

The Marche are at the heart of the Italian Adriatic coast. This seashore extends for 180 kilometers from the headland at Gabicce Mare to the Tronto estuary, with enchanting scenery and resorts rich in attractions for holiday-makers. The land of the Marche can offer an infinite variety of possibilities for an unforgettable holiday, which may be spent following the paths of its ancient, glorious history, whose traces can be found in the villages, castles and towns, not to mention the traditions of folklore and good food. The mountains also meet the needs of winter sports enthusiasts.

There are a large number of sporting and leisure activities to do in a wonderful environment that is all waiting there to be discovered. In the same way, there are spas, too, waiting to be discovered in this region. Along the Via Salaria, in a position overlooking the Tronto river, we come to Acquasanta with its baths that were already well-known in Roman times. The waters gush out at a temperature of 38.6°C, deep in a series of caves, one of which is used as a swimming pool. Acquasanta specializes in treating inflammations of the locomotive disorders (Info: Pro Acquasanta Terme, tel. fax 0736 801291). A small but important spa resort is San Vittore delle Chiuse, in the Genga area, near the famous Frasassi caves, well-known for the therapeutic properties of its sulphurous and slightly radioactive waters (Info: I.A.T., corso della Repubblica 70, 60040 Genga, tel. 0732 625067, fax 0732 629791). Other spa resorts in the Marche worthy of note are Aspio. Carignano. Macerata Feltria. Montegrimano. Petriano. Sarzano. Tolentino.

http://www.italiantourism.com/spas5.html
and Torre di Palme.

www.turismo.marche.it

**Umbria**

Shrouded in gentle, ever-changing natural surroundings, this region seems to those who visit it for the first time like a magic picture in which medieval towns and hills blend one into the other with their infinite color-tones. Umbria is known as the "green head of Italy", and is also rich in folklore and age-old traditions, which combine with the spirituality of sacred places such as Assisi, Norcia and Cascia. Another feature of Umbria is its genuine, tasty, and, above all, simple food that harks back to the smells and colors of history. This land contains a huge cultural heritage, distributed throughout the whole area, and a vast number of natural sights of great charm, from the Marmore waterfall to Lake Trasimeno. Even the earth is permeated with a dense network of underground passages, where the water flows and forms spectacular caves and lakes of enormous interest to speleologists, such as the ones on Mount Cucco, for instance. These waters can naturally be used for therapeutic purposes. The best-known resort is perhaps San Gemini, west of Terni, on the road to Todi; it is famous for its bicarbonate-calcic water, effective in treating digestive or bile disorders (Info: I.A.T., viale Battisti 7, 05100 Temi, tel. 0744 23047, fax 0744 427259). There is also a spa of significance at Città di Castello, in the Tiber valley, where the water is recommended for treatment of arthritic problems of an inflammatory, chronic and degenerative nature (Info: I.A.T., piazza Matteotti - Logge Bufalini, 06012 Città di Castello, tel. 0758 554922, fax 0758 552100). There are also spas at Assisi, Acquasparta and Massa Martana.

www.umbria2000.it

**Lazio**

When we say Lazio we inevitably think immediately of Rome. Rome is the capital of the Lazio region as well as being - as the ancient Latins would have said - the capital of the world. The region of Lazio stands up well in comparison, and is an amazing treasure-chest of art and history. Lazio is a region of great charm, from the naturalistic and environmental point of view, with a great variety of landscapes and a long, exciting history that began even before the founding of the City of Rome. By far the best-known spa resort is Fiuggi, in the Frosinone province. It is mentioned in writings dating from 27 A.D. by Pliny the Elder and Pope Boniface VIII, who was born in Ciociaria and was well acquainted with the spring and the quality of the water, and was a keen consumer of it The source at Fiuggi (the Boniface VIII Spring and the Anticolana Spring) is the only one that has this very unusual spring water, low in mineral content, combining, diuretic properties with an ability to "dissolve" kidney stones and prevent them re-forming. The Fiuggi water is bottled and is widely on sale, but the best way to enjoy its benefits is to drink it directly from the
spring, in an oasis of tranquil, green surroundings full of possibilities for leisure and culture (Info: IAT., via Gorizia 4,03015 Fiuggi, tel. 0775 515446, fax 0775 515766). Another resort in the Ciociaria area is Ferentino, 13 kilometers from Frosinone. This town rich in its historical sites, dates to classical and medieval times. There is a source of sulphurous-bicarbonate-calcic water with excellent therapeutic properties, recommended for rheumatic, respiratory, gynecological, dermatological and circulatory illnesses and disorders (Info: A.P.T., via Moro 465,03100 Frosinone, tel. 0775 833837). At Tivoli, in the Rome area, the carbonic-sulphurous springs that gush out from the two lakes, Regina and Colonnella, are still called by the name that they had right back in ancient times: the Acque Albule. The waters are whitish in color because of the gassy emulsion which forms on their surface. In the Roman era, this water was regarded as miraculous, able to cure all ills, and it is mentioned by Virgil in the Aeneid. The Tivoli water is particularly recommended for the treatment and prevention of inflammatory and allergies diseases of the respiratory system (Info: I.A.T., piazza Garibaldi, 00011 Bagno di Tivoli, tel. 0774 311249, fax 0774 331294). The spa resort of Bagni di Viterbo, just outside the city of Viterbo, with its Etruscan origins, is also especially fascinating because of its past. Popes came to be treated here in the Middle Ages, benefiting from the healing properties of its sulphurous-sulphate-bicarbonate-ferruginous water and the mineral muds that are produced in its springs (Info: A.P.T., piazza San Cartoccio 5,01100 Viterbo, tel. 0761 304795, fax 0761 220957). Other spas in the Latium region are Canale Monterano, Castel Sant’Angelo, Palestrina, Palombara Sabina, Rieti and Suio Terme.

www.turislazio.it

**Abruzzo and Molise**

The land of Abruzzo and Molise, regions that were united administratively in the past, but which are today linked by a common history and by common natural scenery, is a land of landscapes, history, art, traditions and, above all, the beauties of nature which are here well-loved and protected. This region holds a great fascination for everyone, but in particular it offers a vast range of possibilities and activities appealing to young people and to those who enjoy nature, the mountains, rivers and the gentle seashore. There is a vast range of holiday facilities here to satisfy the needs of even the most demanding tourist. The idea of a holiday in this part of Italy is inseparably linked to the countryside and, in particular, to the nature parks in the area, the main one being the Abruzzo National Park. In this very special position between the Adriatic sea and the Apennine massifs, Abruzzo and Molise offer people seeking a spa-holiday a small but significant choice of resorts of considerable interest. We must mention Caramanico Terme, inside the Maiella National Park at an altitude of 600 meters, with its salubrious climate contributing to the effectiveness of treatments based on sulphurous mineral waters and medio-mineral waters (Info: I.A.T., corso Bernardi 39,65023 Caramanico Terme, tel.-fax 0859 22202); then there are Canistro and Raiano in Aquila province, Popoli in the Pescara area, and Sepino in Molise. www.regione.abruzzo.it - www.regione.molise.it

**The wonderful sights of nature and the colors of the South**
Europe’s terrace overlooking the Mediterranean - this is Southern Italy with Campania, Puglia, Basilicata, Calabria, Sicilia and Sardegna: an explosion of colors and perfumes, the deep, limpid sea, and the islands, large and small. A crossroads for the history that has passed through here and left its traces, from Ancient Greece, to the civilization of the Arabs, and from Spain to the Normans. Above all, it offers the splendor of nature, displayed in breathtaking scenery: the green woodlands sloping down into the blue of the sea, the white cliffs and the deep red of the countryside inland. In the midst of these marvels, there are spas that are famous throughout the world: firstly Ischia and its "spa paradise", a piece of Italy offering the chance to holiday in one of the most beautiful and most celebrated seaside resorts; and then there's Agnano, Contursi, Lamezia, Castellammare del Golfo, Margherita di Savoia and Santa Cesarea. Choosing to go to Southern Italy means diving into a unique world and finding a holiday where sun, sea and good health beat together in extraordinary harmony keeping fit on holiday.

Campania

It is in Campania, against the extraordinary background of the island of Ischia, that the tourist has the chance to encounter one of the most important spa districts in Italy. Because of its complex volcanic origin, the island of Ischia has a hydrothermal heritage that is among the richest and most interesting in the world. There are 69 fumaroles groups (or fields) and 29 hydrothermal wells, spouting 103 "spontaneous emergences", scattered over the island's surface of around 42 square kilometers. This wealth of springs has made Ischia famous ever since ancient times. Strabo and Pliny often mention the therapeutic powers of the island's waters, in their writings. The fame of the spas underwent various vicissitudes over the centuries: it was known to the Ancient Greeks, was rediscovered by the Romans in the imperial era and, after centuries of oblivion, it was studied by the doctor Jasolino at the end of the seventeenth century. From then on, the popularity of the Ischia waters has gone on growing, supported by the ever more rigorous research carried out by scientists over the years. Ischia is now acknowledged as the European market leader among spa resorts: there are numerous hotels, with comfortable, modern facilities, offering the chance to have most of the spa treatments in exceptional surroundings, among pine-forests, beaches, wonderful panoramas, restaurants and places of entertainment for young people and high society. The treatments available on the island of Ischia are: mud-therapy, balneotherapy (in individual baths or collective pools), anthrotherapy and inhalation therapy. While taking advantage of these, one can also have access to specific treatments such as massages and medical gymnastics, which make the salutary effects of the waters more effective. Spa waters abound in all the island's resorts, in the same way and with the same characteristics, but they often have specific local properties. The oldest spa in Ischia is the one at Casamicciola. Nobles and wealthy people from all over Europe have come here to undergo treatments. The springs of the Casamicciola area are chlorine-sodium in type, and are recommended for arthritic illnesses, gynecological disorders and diseases of the respiratory tract. The waters at Barano, on the other hand, are classified as salso-sulphate-alkaline, hyperthermal and mineral, and gush out at a temperature of 74 °C; they are recommended for respiratory inflammations and gynecological complaints. The springs at Forio, on the west coast, have waters that are chlorine-sodium-radioactive, and have positive effects on arthritic complaints, gynecological disorders and metabolism disorders. The special feature of the water at Ischia Porto is its salso-sulphate composition, recommended for arthroses and gynecological disorders. Lacco Ameno, on the northern coast, offers the highest known radioactivity factor, due to the presence of...
These waters are rich in sulphur, magnesium and sodium and are recommended in particular for gynecological disorders. Finally, the salso-bromo-iodic waters at Sant'Angelo-Serrara Fontana are especially recommended for metabolism disorders (gout, diabetes) and for some syndromes linked to obesity (Info: A.A.C.S.T., Banchina Porto Salvo, 80077 Ischia Porto, tel. 081 5074231, fax 081 5074230). Spa activity in Campania is not limited to Ischia, however. Virtually the whole region has spa resorts and centers of excellent quality. In the Naples area, for instance, there are Agnano Terme, Bacoli, Torre Annunziata, and Vico Equense, along with the other well-known resorts. Castellamare di Stabia, the ancient Stabiae destroyed in the eruption of Vesuvius in 79 A.D., is located on the south eastern coast of the Gulf of Naples, near the Sorrento peninsula. Twenty-eight springs supply a great variety of waters, covering almost the whole range of possible therapeutic uses (Info: A.A.C.S.T., piazza Matteotti 34, 80053 Castellamare di Stabia, tel.-fax 081 8711334). Pozzuoli, in the centre of the wide volcanic area of the Phlegrean Fields, was already known to the Romans, who used the sulphurous mud for healing purposes. The waters and muds of Pozzuoli are used today in the treatment of respiratory and locomotive system disorders, and for skin complaints (Info: A.A.C.S.T., piazza Matteotti 1,80078 Pozzuoli, tel. 081 5266639, fax 081 5265068). The spa resort of Contursi is situated in the Salerno area, a few kilometers from the Cilento National Park; this resort also has very ancient origins and was frequented by the upper classes at the time of the Roman Empire. The waters are classified as sulphurous and salso-bicarbonate-alkaline-earthy, they are particularly recommended in chronic and degenerative inflammatory illnesses of the locomotive system (Info: Comune di Contursi, via Teatro 1,84024 Contursi Terme, tel. 0828 791455). Further south in the Salerno area, lies the spa town of Montesano sulla Marcellana. There is another important resort, Teles, between Benevento and Caserta. The waters of Teles, too, have been known about since time immemorial. Their use dates back, in fact, to the Roman era, and the great prosperity enjoyed by the town of Telesia under Roman rule can in all probability be attributed to this - so much so, that the town rose to the rank of a colonia (the impressive remains of this Roman settlement can be seen two kilometers away from the centre). The waters here are very rich in mineral salts, carbon dioxide and hydrogen sulphide. They are recommended for a large number of illnesses, and particularly for ear, nose and throat and respiratory disorders, in arthro-rheumatic illnesses, diseases of the vascular system, dermatological problems, female gynoecs problems, and gastro-enteric and bile-duct disorders (Info: Comune di Telese, viale Minieri 1,82037 Telese, tel. 0824 976018). We should also mention the spa resorts of Mondragone in the Caserta province and Villamaina in the Avellino province.

www.turismoregionecampania.it

**Puglia**

A trip to discover Puglia is an occasion and an excuse to enter into complex layers of aesthetic and symbolic dimensions, where natural and cultural beauties appear as a magnificent, multi-faceted jewel: churches and castles,
old town centers, rural architecture, the sea-coasts, the culinary specialties, the warm Mediterranean temperament - all these mingle to make a region rich in history and tradition. Tourism is now a primary economic sector for Puglia. Especially in recent years, the holiday and leisure industry has undergone great development, and it is still going on.

This far end of the Italian Adriatic coast also has its small share of excellent spa resorts. There is Santa Cesarea Terme, for instance, the most important resort in the Salento area, located between rugged cliffs, studded with prehistoric caves, on the Otranto Channel. Its hot mineral waters (sulphurous-salso-bromo-iodic) gush out of the subsoil at a maximum temperature of 30 °C in four coastal caves which connect to the sea. Treatments are carried out with mineral-marine waters in baths, with mud-packs, inhalations and gynecological irrigations. The treatments are particularly recommended for those suffering from rheumatic pains and for metabolism and respiratory disorders (Info: I.A.T., via Roma 209, 73020 Santa Cesarea Terme, tel. 0386 944043).

Margherita di Savoia, a resort in the Foggia area, 56 kilometers from Foggia itself, is well known for its impressive salt works (salt production dates back to the third century A.D.). It has been developing an important role as a spa resort since 1930, with the use of the salso-bromo-iodic waters and the mud taken from the salt-works, particularly recommended for locomotive disorders (Info: I.A.T., via Gargano 8, 71044 Margherita di Savoia, tel. 0883 654012).

One final spa-resort worthy of note is Torre Canne, in the province of Brindisi.

www.regione.puglia.it

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**Basilicata**  top

Magic, enigmatic Basilicata, a land of light and of day, of woods and mountains, and a land also of contrasts and allegories, where the lonely mountains come down abruptly between two seas, the Tyrrhenian and the Ionian, supplying the classic image of the coastal regions of Southern Italy. Getting to know Basilicata is today a really unique and wonderful experience - of great open spaces and unpolluted natural environments, with unforgettable landscapes, and history and folklore offered generously, with hands outstretched. Only in the last few decades has this region's economy been developed and it has seen the end of its centuries-old isolation. For obvious reasons, therefore, there is only limited activity here in the spa sector, but what there is, is quite remarkable. The spas of Basilicata, although still "young" are, nevertheless, gaining rapidly in popularity. The two resorts of Latronico, in the Pollino mountain area, and Rapolla, lying on one of the most beautiful slopes of the Vulture Mountain, are worth a mention (Info: A.P.T., via Alianel 4, 85100 Potenza, tel. 0971 21812, fax 0971 36196).

www.regione.basilicata.it
**Calabria** top

More than 750 kilometers of coasts washed over by the Ionian sea and the Tyrrenian sea: long, stretches of golden beaches alternate with little sandy and rocky bays, and high cliffs plunge into a sea of clear, clear water such as can be found in very few places in Europe. This is Calabria. Its natural beauties are unique, with unexpectedly beautiful beaches, villages and towns in an area where history, tradition and color are the main features. The people of Calabria have an innate hospitality, and the area is endowed with very up-to-date tourist facilities, offering fascinating holidays to suit modern tastes. The food is mainly fresh fish dishes and typical garden produce following the traditional pattern. Spa holidays have recently been developed with great success in Calabria. The most famous of the Calabrian spa resorts is **Terme Luigiane**, in the Cosenza province, divided into two areas, Acquappesa and Guardia Piemontese (an “island” where the people of the Waldensian sect - protestant Christians fleeing from persecution - found refuge, and where an Occitan-Piedmontese dialect is still spoken today). Special treatments for rhinogenous deafness are carried out with its salso-bromo-iodic-sulphurous mineral waters (Info: A.P.T., corso Mazzini 92, 87100 Cosenza, tel. 0984 27271, fax 0984 27304). There are several other resorts in the provinces of Calabria which have spas, such as **Antonimina**, **Cassano allo Jonio**, **Galatro**, **Lamezia Terme** and **Spezzano Albanese**.

[www.regione.calabria.it](http://www.regione.calabria.it)

**Sicilia** top

The largest Island in the Mediterranean offers interesting possibilities for spa holidays. If we imagine a tour around Sicilia, starting in a clockwise direction from Messina, we come first of all to **Ali Terme**, situated on the Ionian sea, in an area that is rich in traces of Greek, Arab and Norman civilizations. The properties of its salso-bromo-iodic and sulphurous waters were tested by the great philosopher Descartes (Info: AAPIT, via Calabria, Isolato 301 bis, 98122 Messina, tel. 090 674236, fax 090 601005). Going along the south coast, we come to **Acireale**, in the Catania province. This Baroque jewel looks out over the sea like a terrace. The origins of the spa at Acireale go way back: the Roman baths were built in the 1st century A.D., in the Reitana district, near the springs of sulphurous waters, which come from Mount Etna. The spas offer treatments that are particularly recommended for locomotive disorders (Info: A.P.T., via Cimarosa 10,95024 Acireale, tel. 095 7306222, fax 095 316407). After a long trip around the south coast of the Island, we come to the Agrigento area, and to **Sciacca**. This resort also has an age-old reputation as a spa, dating back to Roman times, and offers treatments based on the hyperthermal sulphurous salso-bromo-iodic waters:

the natural steam caves at San Calogero are also worthy of note; their origin is lost in the mists of time, but legend has it that they were the work of Daedalus, who brought scalding vapours into these caves from out of the ground. In the Agrigento province, there is also Montevago, a charming spa town (with excellent treatments for articulation problems), situated in the Belice valley, just a few kilometres from the beautiful little town of Castelvetrano (Info: AAPIT, viale della Vittoria 255, 92100 Agrigento, tel. 0922 21182, fax 0922 25185). Going up the western side of Sicilia, we come to the province of Trapani and to Calatabiani, a picturesque town of Arab origin with warm, alkaline-sulphurous waters, especially suitable for treating chronic, degenerative and traumatic inflammatory arthritic illnesses (Info: Ufficio Informazioni Turistiche, piazza Cangemi, 91013 Calatabiani, tel. 0924 956241, fax 0924 950867). Finally we come to the north coast of the island, and to Castellammare del Golfo. A new spa has been started up here, created in 1958 and expanded in 1990 on the old, legendary Acque Segestane which Strabo refers to. The waters are recommended for locomotive disorders. A visit to the splendid Segesta temple, one of the best-preserved monuments of Doric architecture in the world, is not to be missed (Info: Ufficio Informazioni Turistiche, via De Gasperi 6, 91014 Castellammare del Golfo, tel. 0924 592303, fax 0924 30217).

In the coastal area of the Palermo province, there is Termine Imerese, an ancient town founded by the Carthaginians, on the top of a promontory with a view over the magnificent gulf. There are two springs, with salso-bromo-iodic waters gushing out at a temperature of 41 °C. They are used to treat disorders of the first airways, for degenerative arthritic problems and for female genital problems (Info: AAPIT, piazza Castelnuovo 35, 90141 Palermo, tel. 091 583847, fax 091 582788). Finally, we must not forget the resort of Terme Vigliatore, between the Milazzo and the Tindari headlands, also of Roman origin and today an important spa resort, well-known in particular for the treatment of biliar and liver disorders (Info: AAPIT, via Calabria, Isolato 301 bis, 98122 Messina, tel. 090 674236, fax 090 601005).

**Sardegna** top

In Sardegna, the marvelous sea, the cleanest in Italy, the jagged coasts, and the breathtaking scenery are its unmistakable characteristics, making the island one of the most popular tourist destinations in Italy, especially for visitors from Continental Europe. The sea is without any doubt the most important resource for tourism in Sardegna, but for many years, people have been coming to the island for other reasons, too. First of all, to discover the mysterious, very ancient history of which evidence is to be found in the various Nuraghi settlements (such as the Barumini group and the Losa and Abbasanta Nuraghe, in the Oristano area). Then there are the many towns which
are interesting from the point of view of their art and traditions; and finally, the tourists come also because of what the
spa resorts have to offer. The main spa resorts in Sardegna are situated in the Sassari province. The **Benetutti** spas
are located in an area rich in prehistoric remains; the waters here are sulphurous-saiso-bromo-iodic in type and are
used to treat the osteo-articular apparatus, the respiratory tract, and skin and metabolic disorders. The **Bultei** spa
and the one at **Tempio Pausania** (Info: E.P.T., viale Caprera 36,07100 Sassari, tel. 0792 99544 fax 0792 99415) are
also located in the Sassari province. In the province of Cagliari, we have **Sardara**, famous because its bicarbonate,
sodium-hyperthermal waters have characteristics that are very similar to those of the well-known French Vichy water,
and are used for treating locomotive, respiratory and digestive disorders (Info: E.P.T., piazza Deffenu 9,09124
Cagliari, tel. 070 604241, fax 070 663207).

www.regione.sardegna.it

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