

WHAT AND WHERE places: a small guide about the Gallura

(text by Antonella Bonacossa)

The region Gallura has many contrasts: the asperity of the rock combined with the mild climate and colours, which brings out the poetry in the hearts of many also to those who are apparently heartless. Our approach to food, the aromas and tastes which are absolutely delicious, yet unusual. We invite you to discover through us the beauty and all the less known aspects of nature and culture of Sardinia, so we recommend if you are able to plan your trip in Gallura during the months of April, May, September and October, which are the most beautiful periods: nature awakens in a mild climate that allows you to enjoy the sea and the beach without the typical crowds of the high season. The earth is covered with a bright green, fragrant flowers and plants, the sky is clear and blue. In addition to the sea and beaches, we recommend walking, visits to many archaeological sites, festivals and village festivals, mini tours of one or two days. Hiking, archaeology, museums, water sports, horse riding, golf, the many beaches, these are just a few of the activities that await you in our part of the Gallura.

THE NEAREST BEACHES:

Maria Marina

Please don't say to anyone the wonders of this hidden beach, a step away from Olbia. To get there from our house drive along the road of the "Spirito Santo" to the main road 125, then turn south in the direction to Murta Maria, a charming hamlet on the fast growing east coast. Marina Maria is one of the last coastal wetlands, besieged by lots, and a valuable habitat for gulls, crabs, molluscs and cormorants, whose overbearing presence is evidenced by the myriad of shells scattered on the white sand. Take the road Via dei Gladioli, just before entering the village. Leave your car in the parking lot and to stretch your legs go for a walk toward and along the beach, that is free from houses, from antennas: this is just the fishermen's sea. If not afraid to crush shells and crabs circumvented the beach walking in water of the pond, transparent but warm until you come to small dunes emerging from the calm behind the white of sand. The pond is a microcosm of marine life, with the cold currents coming in the turquoise of the sea. This beach, is also a paradise for experts surfers.



Porto Istana

If you are going to visit Porto Istana be prepared to be dazzled by the incomparable beauty of this beach that appears suddenly just left the parking lot. This beautiful bay is surrounded by the sea, just in front of Tavolara Island. The crystal clear water gently slopes down until it reaches a height for swimming, while the bay, (almost always protected from



the Mistral winds), sweeps around and embraces the Tavolara. Directions: from our house take the road of the "Spirito Santo" up to the main road SS 125, then follow the road up to Murta Maria and turn at the sign "Porto Istana" you will find the beach after about 2.2 kilometres, this is equipped with many services: public transport, bar, restaurant, beach services, pedal boat hire.

Li Cuncheddi

Returning from Porto Istana towards Murta Maria to a diversion road on the right, about two hundred meters before the junction of SS 125, incomparable views across the Gulf of Olbia, the road becomes a dirt track, (hopefully this beautiful environment does not alter), and falls on solitary coast, where there are lovely beaches such as Li Cuncheddi, Cala sa Figù, the beach Sos Passizeddos, Porto Casu, Porto Vitello, and last but not least the view on the Gulf of Olbia. Carrying on ahead you will find the headland of Capo Ceraso. The pink granite rocks, the thick scrub and forests of surviving olive trees grant a truly unique panorama.



Tavolara



Set in the Gulf of Olbia, in front of Porto San Paolo, looking from the mainland, the Tavolara offers, in its different perspectives, now a pyramid, now a mountain of white rock walls overlooking the sea. Below sea level there is a very rich world which is of particular interest for divers. Accessible by boat from Porto San Paolo, this narrow isthmus called "Spalmatore di terra" has a beautiful long beach. Also on the island, there are typical bars and restaurants.

Budoni

With its heritage of long coastline on the Tyrrhenian Sea, Budoni boasts of beautiful scenery, beautiful sandy beaches surrounded by walls of rock. The



closest beach, is only 300 meters away from the centre. A characteristic rocky beach with a beautiful pine forest around, the bottom of the sea is very clear alternating between sand, rocks, and small rocks near the shoreline. More beaches in Porto Ottiolu, these also have facilities such as parking lots, bars, services, rental of paddleboats and surfing.

Lido di Pittulongu



Only 6 km from Olbia, on the coastal road to Golfo Aranci, it is worthwhile to visit these many small white sandy beaches,

which are most popular among the locals. Take beautiful walks at sunset taking in the breathtaking views of the Tavolara or even better in the early morning when the sun rises behind the big island.

AND ALSO ...

Spiaggia del Principe



A truly exclusive beach, located at Romazzino, which is the favourite of Prince Karim for its extraordinary beauty, due to the striking combination of colours: the clear shallow water combined with pink rocks and the glossiness of the sand composed of granite fragments.

Archipelago of La Maddalena

Colours, colours, an incredible transparency, you can definitely reach it easy thanks to the barge trips that you can book just a day before departing



from Palau or Cannigione. A real mystical experience that you can have with a truly modest cost which is the ticket that usually also includes a spaghetti on board. The small boat is equipped for specialized tours.

Porto Rotondo

Exclusive, unique, not to be missed, here, He played the kind of accuracy by drawing geometrically a perfect cove where the village takes its name. The beauty of this mediterranean scrub, is that the coast of granite Ischia Segada joins at Punta Volpe, in a powerful complex of bedrock, from which one can enjoy the spectacular panorama of the Costa Smeralda, its sea, its islands. From afternoon to night, Porto Rotondo always offers cultural events and theme nights.



NATURE & ARCHAEOLOGY:

Pedres castle and the "Tomb of the Giants"



On the road between Olbia and Loiri, on the left, the fort was built in medieval times by judges of Gallura to defend the territory, and was the scene of

fierce battles between Genoa, Pisa and Aragon. There are two remaining walls which were not completely destroyed, it stands on a fascinating hill, which dominates the whole Gulf and can be reached through a path surrounded by scrub. A few steps from this hill, is the beautiful megalithic burial site of "Monte 'e s' Abe", XVIII - XVI century. A.C.

Basilica of San Simplicio in Olbia

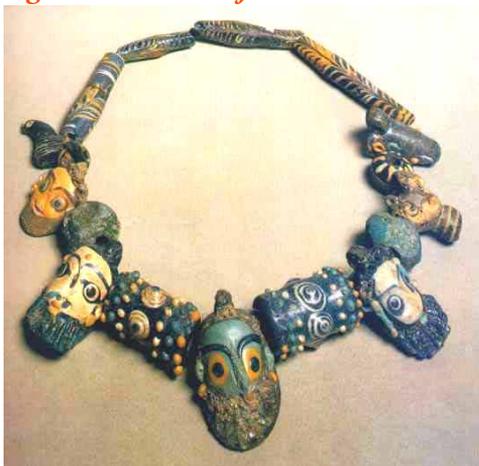
It is the most important, artistic and ancient religious monument of the Gallura and also one of the most noble places relating to the first beginnings of Christianity in Sardinia, the Basilica stands in the centre of



the city. San Simplicio is the patron of the Diocese of Tempio Pausania and the city of Olbia. It was built in three distinct periods: the second half of the eleventh century until the twelfth century, where the facade was completed.

The Archaeological Museum of Olbia

The Archaeological Museum is located along the road leading to the Port, just in front of the old town. Outside, a large central patio in which you will find some of the Roman ships recently



found, and a number of functional areas such as the Library, the Auditorium and Congress Centre. Upstairs advanced technologies have reproduced ships that were sunken and recently found during the construction of the Tunnel. It is a multipurpose structure, mainly devoted to archaeology from the Neolithic period for the Judicial Age.

Nuraghe Riu Mulinu



Behind the Industrial area of Olbia, on the hill, is an extraordinary monument that seems to defy the law of gravity. Follow

the road Cabu Abbas, the brown-coloured signs will guide you towards the Nuraghe, park on the side apron and climb on foot for about a quarter of an hour on the stone track: in addition to the ruins you will have a fantastic view over the city and the Gulf of Olbia.

Pozzo sacro "Sa Testa"

This was probably built at the end of the Bronze Age. This building has a large courtyard that provides access to a vestibule, which in turn is connected by a staircase to the "camera tholos" which is very dominating. The courtyard, accessible through a staircase of four steps, is irregularly circular, and is enclosed by a massive wall along which, there is a seat presumably to accommodate the people during the sacred ceremonies for the wor-



ship of water. From the courtyard, fully paved, you have access to the well through a scale of seventeen steps. At the excavation pit numerous artefacts were found relating to Nuragic, Punic and Roman times, which are signs of a continuity of use almost always linked to pagan rituals. To get there: coming from Olbia on the Via dei Lidi, you cross the Industrial Zone, arriving at the roundabout you see the signs that mark the site.

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A LITTLE MORE DISTANT IN GALLURA

San Pantaleo

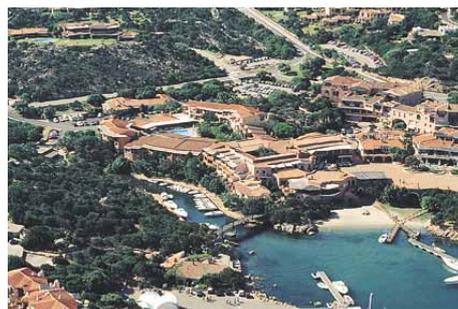
A church, a square, a small shop and a handful of stazzi (rural houses) that once formed a "Cus-sorgia" between forests of oaks



and cork trees in the granite peaks of Punta Cugnana. Everything here is a surviving piece of the Gallura far away from "rustic chic" of the Costa Smeralda. San Pantaleo is the refuge for those who want to move away from the mundane, a refuge for artists and craftsmen who have original laboratories, which are open to visitors.

Porto Cervo

What about the most exclusive locations in Italy? Everything and the opposite of all, this is Porto Cervo, fantastic days,

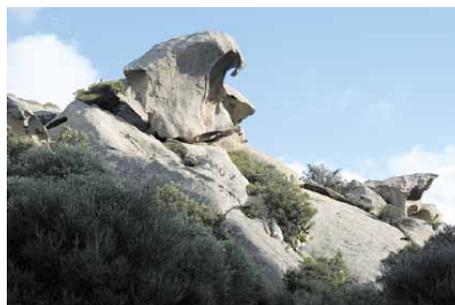


society at night, you will find here, the most fashionable boutiques of the moment, the best (and most expensive) rooms to spend your evenings

into the night, walk amongst the chic and be surrounded by famous people. A trip to the marina is a must, a dream to see the incredible boats moored there.

Gallura Magical, enchanted granite in Palau

It is said that in Sardinia there are sites that because of their particular energy carry the individual to a more intimate contact within himself because



conserved energy that radiates from the earth and the cosmos is still strong and vibrant. One of the most interesting is in the area of San Giorgio in Palau, near a small rural church. Here the energy is really at home. The strange rocks have special therapeutic properties, all to discover!

From Tempio Pausania to Oschiri, Monti and Berchidda



Around wine-ries, to Oschiri to complete the tour of the wine and food tasting timeless “panadas”. To the fans of the nectar of Bacchus, Gallura offers an im-

pressive wine road through the vineyards, passing the finest wineries of the social Vermentino. Do not miss the Museum of Modern Wine in Berchidda and also the beautiful church of Nostra Signora di Castro, a few kilometres from Oschiri.

Luogosanto

Gallurese country par excellence, Luogosanto retains almost unaltered traditions of this land which is rich in contrasts. Its name derives



from the strong religious tradition that has always been and by the many places of worship that have been erected in its territory. Take particular attention to the rural church of San Trano dating back to the thirteenth century and the stone buildings which are typical of the small city centre.



Aggius

Famous for the intricate story of “faide” linked to the outland “Muto di Gallura,” this is perhaps the country that best

preserves the traditions and craft of the area, as in the polyphonic song and in the texture of carpets. It is said that the art of carpet in Aggius was imported from a Turkish slave, hence the designs and colors that distinguish the Arabian manufacturing of these carpets that were originally used like saddlebags. Visit the shops using wooden frames and colours strictly from plants to produce the valuable achievements of above.



Calangianus

Calangianus life revolves around the large oak trees from which cork is extracted for natural insulation material, and also the raw material is used for seals, beautiful objects d’art, or even elegant dress for women. Visit the shops and do not miss the oldest oak in Europe!

Moon Valley, a travel in paradise

Along the road to Capo Testa is the door to a free world. Cross the isthmus on which lie the two large bays of Levante and Santa Reparata. Leave your car there and you will find between the two large smooth stones that mark a narrow



passage. Be careful to remember the forms: those strange stones mark the way and

everything, here, it seems what is not. What seems to be a path loses in anything, you must observe, listen to the wind, to remember the way, to find the way back. Observe that rock on the left, it has a strange shape of ghost and the two large cubes of granite are a work of the Roman period. The people of Peace and Love live here among caves carved by the wind. An experience that should not be missed!

Tempio Pausania and The Sources of Rinagghju

A happy geographical location for this nice town in Gallura: Temple is located at the foot of Mount Limbara, immersed in a



forest of green oak and olive trees. Noteworthy is the contrast between the sweetness of the surrounding and the austerity of the old granite building in the historical centre. Many interesting monuments, churches, buildings of Judicial era, to be discovered walking in the lanes. Do not miss a visit to the sources Rinagghju, famous for its therapeutic properties of water, and why not, take a relaxing session at the Spa itself. These spring waters, have been known since ancient times for their therapeutic properties. The Spa can be easily reached from the old town with a pleasant walk along the road which runs alongside the beautiful pine forest of San Lorenzo.

AND NOW... A LITTLE HISTORY



The Stazzo is a typical building of the Gallura countryside, surrounded by Tanche (land), closed by a stone wall, the Stazzo was in fact a completely self-sufficient farmhouse: every activity was to maintain the family, nothing was left to chance, it produced everything needed to live.

The term stazzo derives from the Latin "Statio, that is a place where you can stop, stay; a place, that presupposes the previous long and tiring journeys in search of good pasture for animals. We find this kind of stable accommodation in Gallura, from about 1500, it appears at the end of the feudal period and the feud certainly inspired it in work and management of resources.



It was frequently built on a hill, to dominate the land, and on the front was well cared "lu Pastruciali" (the square), place of arrival, departure and storage for horses. The wall outside the Stazzo was organized for the temporary stationing of the horses, with a long granite bench above which were some iron rings to tie the horse in waiting. A little further along was a courtyard, with the garden for vegetables.

There were usually many plants of almond, peach, fig trees, whose fruits were dried and used food. Nearby there was generally a well to draw the water. There was also the vineyard and garden. There was also a room called "Camasinu", to keep the cheese and wine.



In some cases, the same room was used to prepare cheese and butter: there was a fire in the middle of the room for this. In some stazzi, like ours, are still visible traces of this operation: the old wooden beams of juniper are blackened by smoke during the years of fire burning. The women of the family took care of the children, the vegetable and poultry, the economic management of the house, the men working to the most demanding tasks.

In the first years of '900, there were, in Gallura, more than six thousand stazzi, scattered in the countryside, and these farms were frequently visited by roving, "li Stragni", which in Stazzi still found shelter and warm food for many days and returned the hospitality to the hosts doing small jobs, or simply telling stories of other places around the hearth. From the middle of 1900 people began to move to the cities and industries of the Italian peninsula: the Gallura countryside was abandoned and the Stazzi remained closed for a long time. Ours was saved and living as we still leave here. Stazzo Bonacossa was built at the end of the 1600 century and inhabited by the same family, although restored and expanded, it still however, retains the spirit of the true Gallura, its secrets, joys and sorrows of those who lived there.



Antonella Bonacossa and her family continue to live there with a big passion for the traditions and respect in the past. People "la jenti" Bonacossa ap-

peared in Sardinia at the end of 1600, we found written traces by the Bishop's Curia of Tempio, from which the Loi-ri area depended at that time. The births and deaths of all this area were also recorded in Tempio until the middle of last century, when even small municipalities acquired the Registry.

Bonacossa came with high probability from Corsica, as many of the families in Gallura did, probably driven by political or social issues. Bonacossa settled in the Gallura buying up the land over the centuries that is currently held. They were always breeders of wild cattle, an activity that needed a lot of land for pastures.

Stazzo Bonacossa was the first home of the family and still retains all characteristics of the original Stazzo Gallurese, the elongated structure with local granite in the three-room classic, the complicated system of juniper original beams, the old wood-burning oven, built with dry clay bricks, the bench for the horses, and the niches for the preservation of food.

The Bonacossa always pass the names of its firstborn sons, so that Pietro to Raimondo to Pietro till nowadays.

