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02.1 THE SEA

Popogna lies between Versilia and the Etruscan Coast. The Etruscan Coast reaches along the entire continental coastline of the Livorno province, including, from south to north, the municipal territories of Piombino, San Vincenzo, Castagneto Carducci, Bibbona, Cecina, Rosignano Marittimo and Livorno, appearing mainly flat and sandy in the stretch between Rosignano Solvay to the north and the Gulf of Baratti to the south, with generally golden beaches, except for the coastal reach between Rosignano Solvay and Vada with its fascinating White Beaches.

Northwards, the pleasant promontories of Castiglioncello, Quercianella and Calafuria separate the elegant localities of Antignano and Ardenza, representing the southern side of Livorno, from the remaining coastal stretch; to the south rises the promontory of Piombino and on its summit stands Populonia, dividing the Gulf of Baratti from the town of Piombino.

The Etruscan Coast originally owes its name to the many necropoli dotted between the Gulf of Baratti and Populonia, the only Etruscan settlement built along the coast; the name later extended to the entire coastal stretch of the Livorno province, roughly coinciding with the Maremma Livornese.

There are the famous beaches of Castiglioncello, Quercianella, Rosignano, San Vincenzo, Tirrenia, Forte dei Marmi, not to mention the isles of the Tuscan archipelago: Gorgogna, Capraia, Giglio, Elba, Montecristo and Pianosa.

Aside from the port of Livorno, which is approx. 10 km away, there are the nearby tourist harbours of Antignano, Bocche d'Arno, Quercianella and, a little further away, Punta Ala.

In the area of the existing Livorno port a new tourist port is being built, which is to become the largest and most important tourist harbour of the Tyrrhenian Sea. Even with a medium/small sized craft you can reach the isles with their enchanting bays and creeks: this is the Tuscan archipelago, with its legendary isles of Capraia, Elba, Montecristo etc. etc.



01. view of San Lorenzo beach

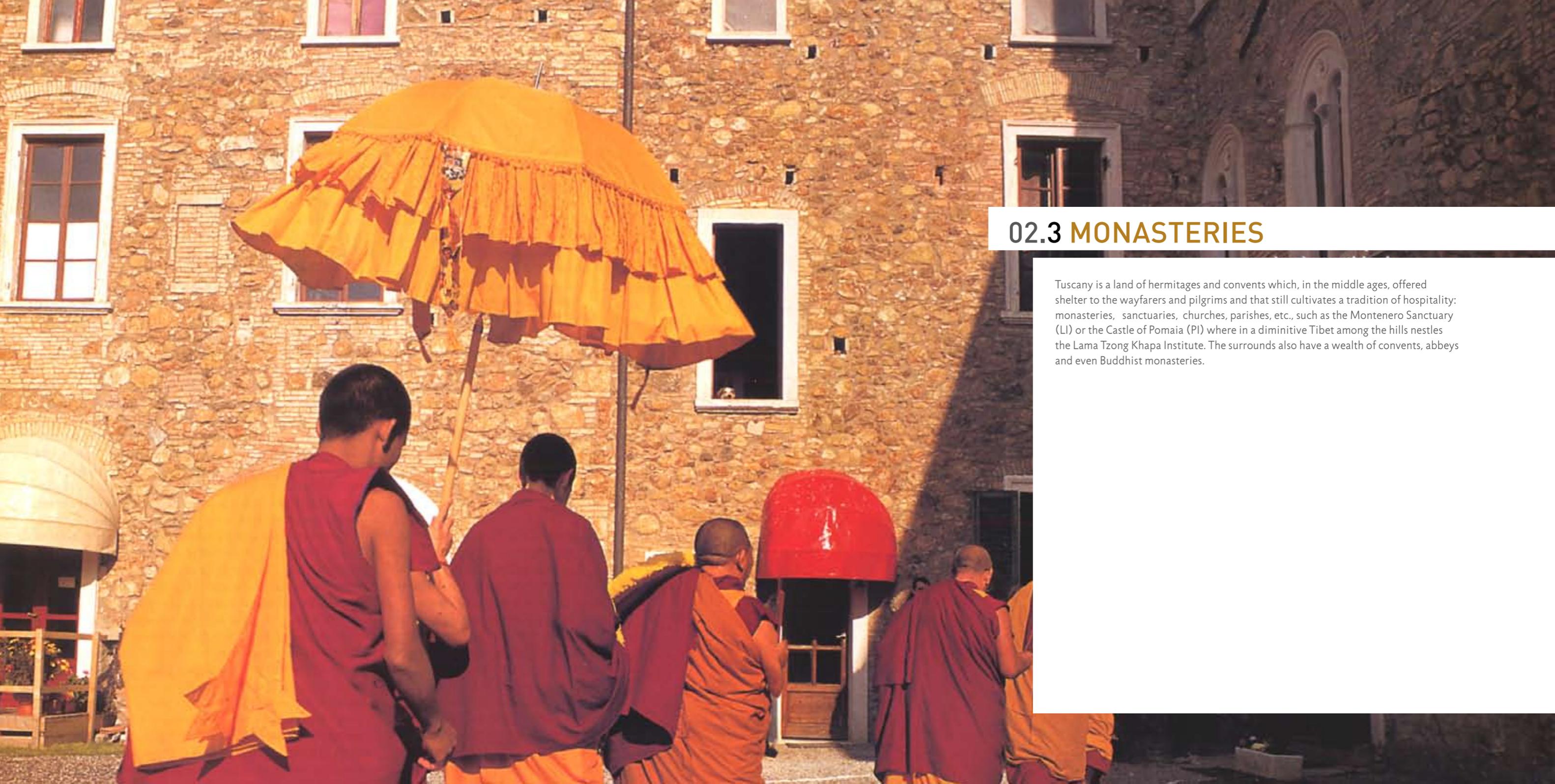


02. view of Capria Island seen from Quercianetta



02.2 THE SPAS

We are in the land of "good living"; not far from here you can find the most beautiful spas and wellness centres for the body's health and beauty: a wealth of precious waters, with extraordinary therapeutic properties, enhanced by modern methods and innovative treatments: Baths of Casciana (PI), Baths of Chianciano (SI), Baths of Monsummano (PT), Montecatini Thermae (PT), Baths of Vignoni (SI), Sancasciano Baths (SI), Saturnia (GR) etc. etc.



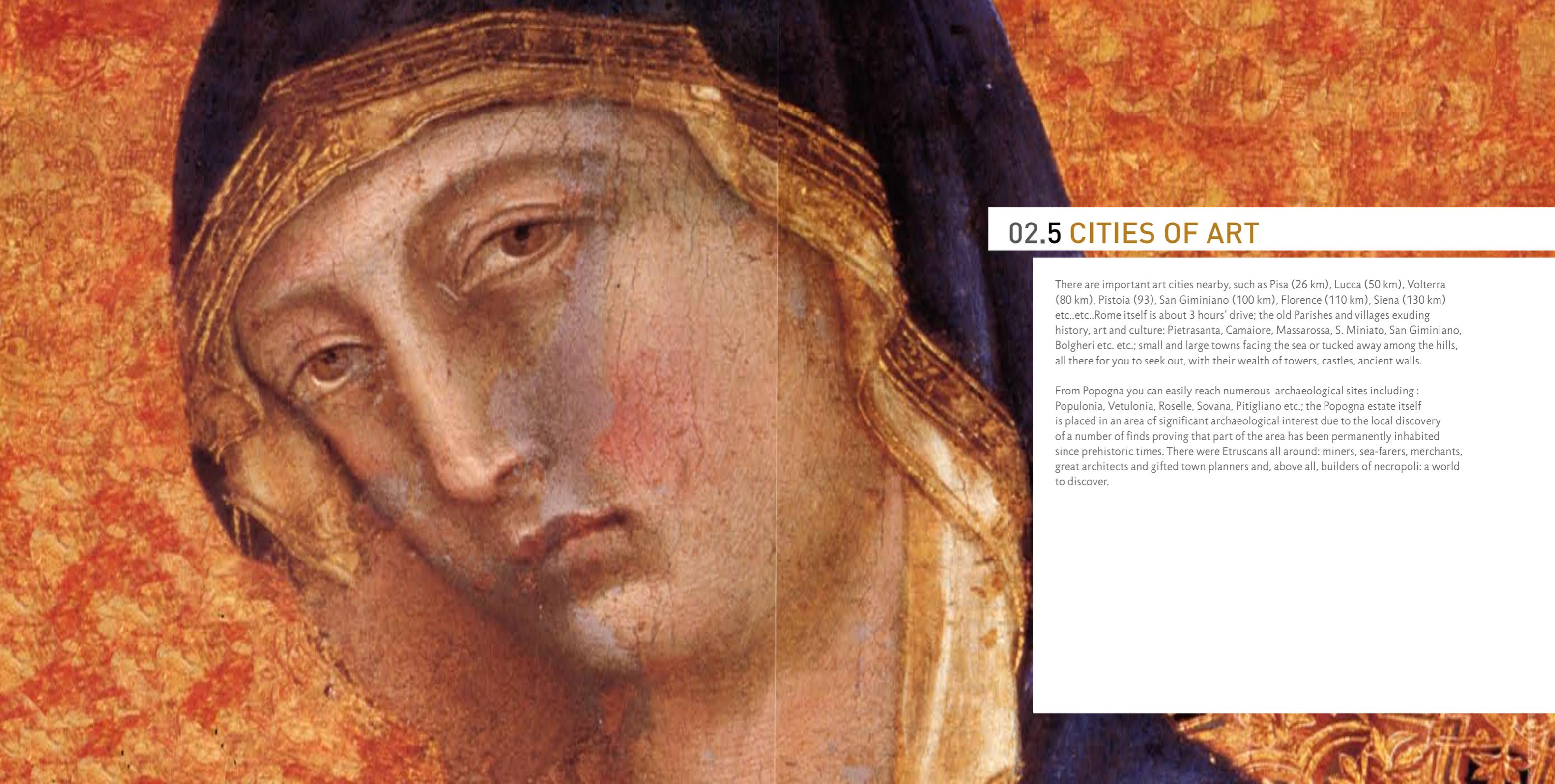
02.3 MONASTERIES

Tuscany is a land of hermitages and convents which, in the middle ages, offered shelter to the wayfarers and pilgrims and that still cultivates a tradition of hospitality: monasteries, sanctuaries, churches, parishes, etc., such as the Montenero Sanctuary (LI) or the Castle of Pomaia (PI) where in a diminutive Tibet among the hills nestles the Lama Tzong Khapa Institute. The surrounds also have a wealth of convents, abbeys and even Buddhist monasteries.



02.4 EX VOTO

The Montenero Sanctuary features one of the largest collections of ex-voto in Italy; these add up to at least seven hundred, collected and exhibited in the ample halls surrounding the Church. The date of these votive plaques is fairly recent, starting from the early nineteenth century to-date. In the course of the last two hundred years a great number of people has wished to leave an ex-voto, a picture, an object, in memory of grace received and as symbol of thanksgiving to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Aside from representing the faith of those who left them, these ex-voto also depict scenes of everyday life in the different periods: people in their attire, the streets, the sea, the homes, the means of transport... a piece of history which is at once simple and precious. They are expressions of mercy, devotion and gratitude to the Virgin. It is simply impossible to attempt to describe them all here: images of fishermen, soldiers, wayfarers, children, workers, housewives; some of these images are more naïve, while others are expressions of more distinctive folk art. One can also admire the works of renowned authors: "the little horse" by Giovanni Fattori, "the motorcyclist" by Renato Natali and, also by the same artist, a picture of the Port of Livorno. All this has always inspired general interest in this vast and authentic iconographic representation of the man-sea-divinity relationship over the last 200 years. But the fundamental reason for this great interest is the faith, simple and naïve though it may be, of the protagonists of these illustrated episodes.



02.5 CITIES OF ART

There are important art cities nearby, such as Pisa (26 km), Lucca (50 km), Volterra (80 km), Pistoia (93), San Gimignano (100 km), Florence (110 km), Siena (130 km) etc..etc..Rome itself is about 3 hours' drive; the old Parishes and villages exuding history, art and culture: Pietrasanta, Camaiore, Massarossa, S. Miniato, San Gimignano, Bolgheri etc. etc.; small and large towns facing the sea or tucked away among the hills, all there for you to seek out, with their wealth of towers, castles, ancient walls.

From Popogna you can easily reach numerous archaeological sites including : Populonia, Vetulonia, Roselle, Sovana, Pitigliano etc.; the Popogna estate itself is placed in an area of significant archaeological interest due to the local discovery of a number of finds proving that part of the area has been permanently inhabited since prehistoric times. There were Etruscans all around: miners, sea-farers, merchants, great architects and gifted town planners and, above all, builders of necropoli: a world to discover.



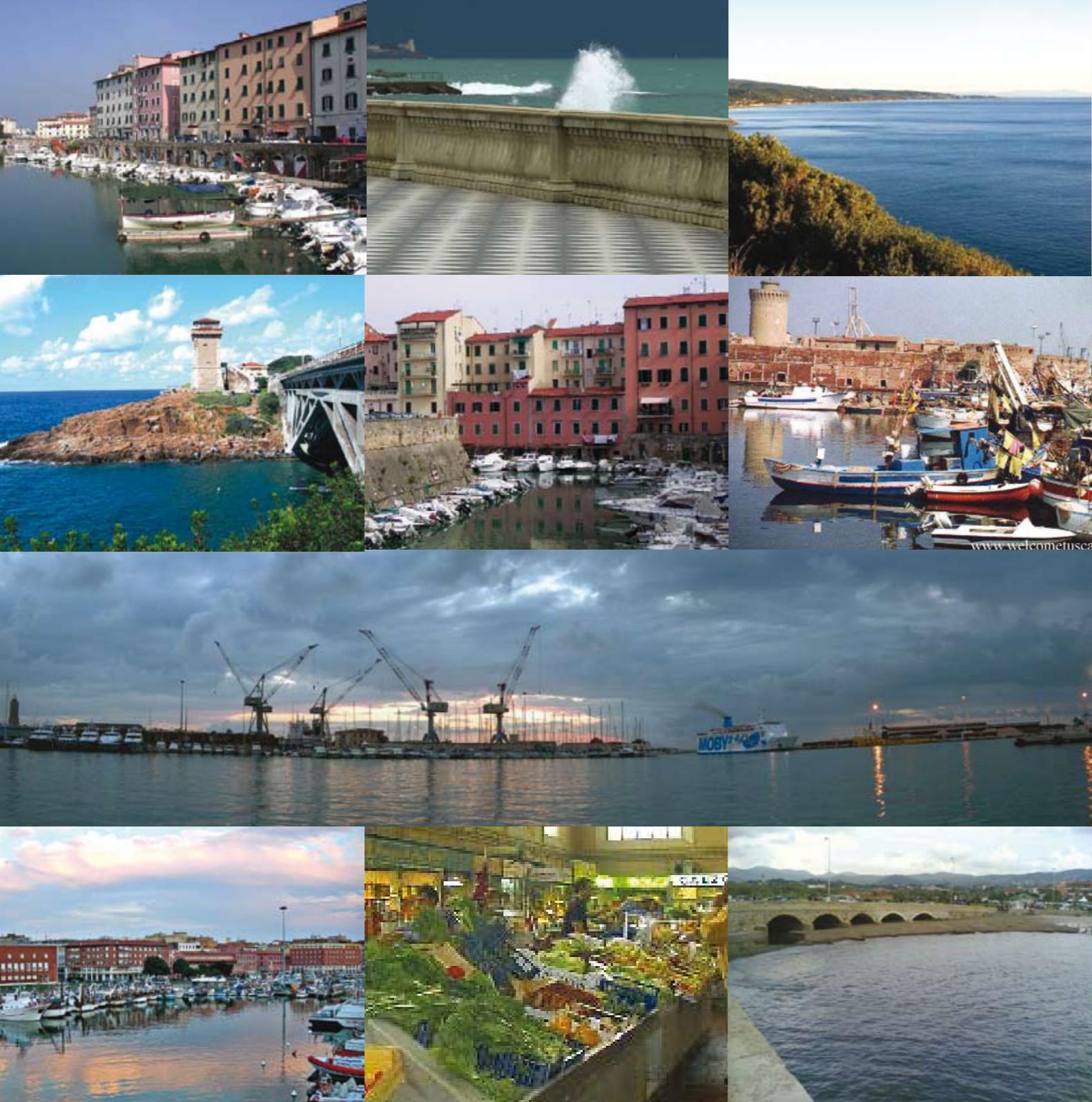
02.6 LIVORNO

Livorno conserva il fascino dell'antica città marinara assieme al volto toscano per eccellenza, quello della città ideale progettata dal maestro del Rinascimento, Bernardo Buontalenti. Una città nata dunque all'insegna del contrasto, cosmopolita per natura, essendo l'attività portuale e marinara l'occasione privilegiata per l'incontro di culture, lingue, volti diversi.

In virtù del suo dinamismo intellettuale, Livorno ha fornito al panorama artistico e culturale internazionale uomini di grandissima levatura: la sensibilità lirica di Pietro Mascagni, l'esperienza pittorica del macchiaiolo Giovanni Fattori, il genio di Amedeo Modigliani sono il contributo dell'antica città marinara alla costruzione di una storia dell'arte e della cultura europea.

UN PO' DI STORIA...

La data di nascita di Livorno si fa tradizionalmente risalire al 28 marzo 1577, quando Cosimo I Granduca di Toscana, per assicurarsi uno sbocco sul mare, incaricò il Buontalenti di costruire una "città ideale". Sul finire del Cinquecento la relativa liberalità del Granducato di Toscana, fortunata eccezione rispetto alla politica reazionaria degli altri Stati d'Italia, favorì l'insediamento a Livorno di comunità costrette a lasciare i luoghi d'origine a causa delle persecuzioni etniche, razziali, politiche o religiose. Fu così che a Livorno arrivarono Ebrei, Greci, Armeni, Inglesi e Olandesi che fornirono nuovo lievito per la maturazione culturale, politica e intellettuale della città. Durante il Risorgimento Livorno, tradizionale vivaio di anarchici e socialisti, fornì menti illuminate e consapevoli alla causa della libertà e indipendenza nazionale.

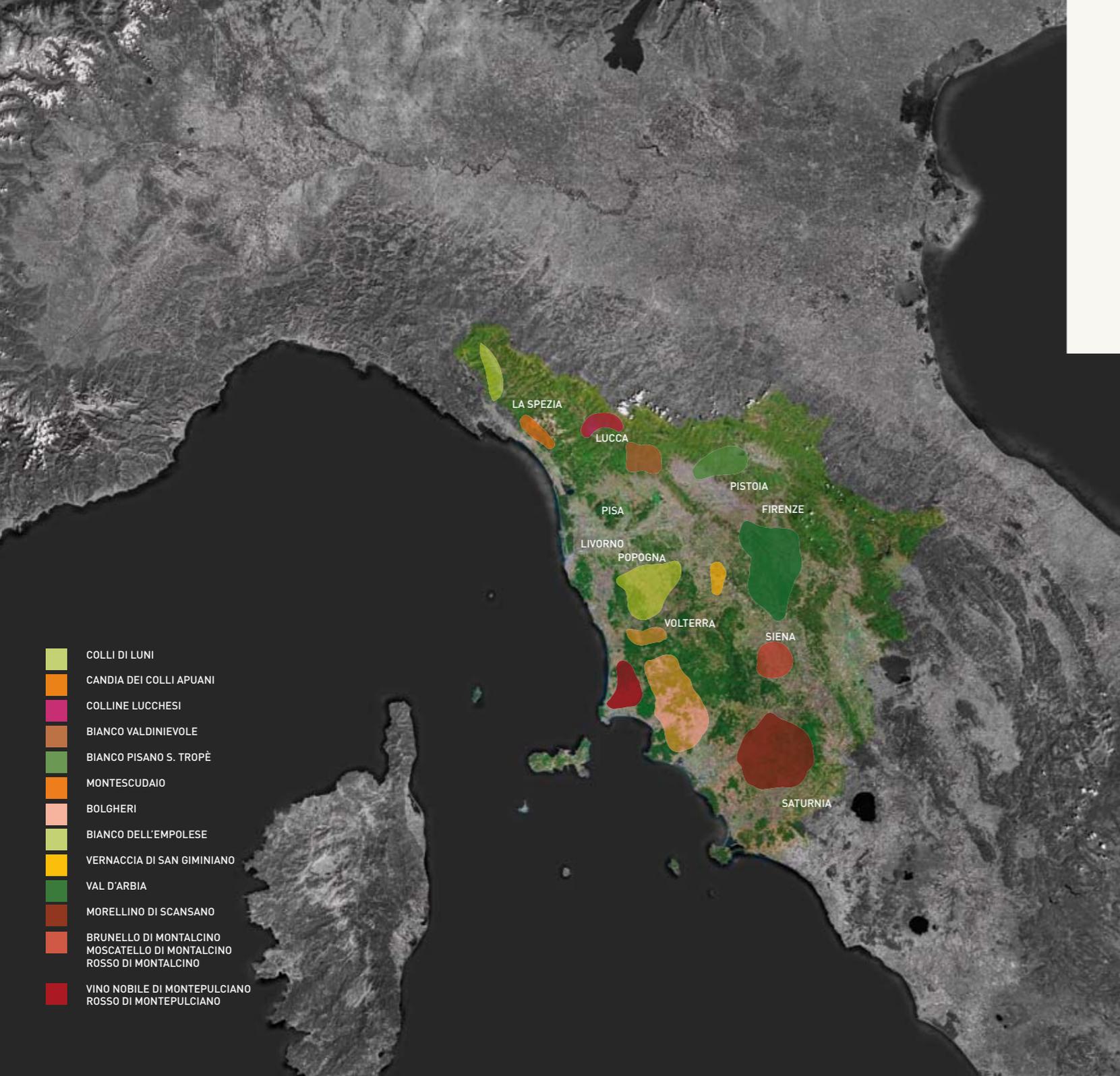


LOCAL SHOWS

Every year, around the 25th April, the Naval Academy Sailing Trophy - City of Livorno lures around 600 craft from all over the world. Two thousand among the best racing sailors, crews and skippers meet up in Livorno to attend a classic rendez-vous in the Italian yachting calendar, which foresees over 75 regatta trials with 14 classes simultaneously present on 9 active fields. A number of cultural and artistic events accompany this important exhibition dedicated to the sea and its leisure activities.

Between June and July Livorno hosts the Gare Remiere (Rowing Races) among the town's Rioni (Districts). The most important show held at this time of the year is the Palio Marinaro (Sea Banner Contest) which takes place in July in the stretch of sea reaching out in front of the Terrazza Mascagni. It is the city's contest par excellence, during which the Livorno districts contend for the "banner". At the end of June the Barontini Cup takes place, a night-time rowing contest of absolute charm. Once again the contenders are the town Districts; in this case, however, it's a timed race along the Livorno canals, weaving through the city's festively decked out historical quarters.

The Coppa dei Risi'atori, which is an open sea event held at the end of June, actually goes back to the Medicean epoch: the name of the competition derives from the verb "arrisicare" which in the old days meant risking one's life and, in this case, referred to sailors who endangered their own existence by bravely going to sea. Only the eight strongest Districts can take part in this competition, which starts from the Torre della Meloria to return to port after racing for eight kilometres. At the end of the month of July, the Effetto Venezia exhibition is to take place, an event which enlivens the historical "Venice" quarter of Livorno with intense musical, theatrical and street art performances. The picturesque network of canals, narrow lanes, bridges and historic quarters teems with stalls, craftwork shops, fascinating forms of entertainment and the specialties of the local cuisine.



02.7 THE WINE LAND

A simple and yet refined cuisine, the secret of which is the really high quality locally produced ingredients, from wine to oil, to meat, vegetables, fruit; the ancient tradition of desserts like "ricciarelli" and "cantuccini", the secrets of Vinsanto etc. etc.

In the immediate vicinity you'll find the "wine route"; the area's restaurants and "trattorie" are also well renowned for their skill in providing the local specialities, particularly appreciated for the distinctive flavours and authenticity of its local products, like the "chianina" beef, olive oil, vegetables and fruit, cheeses, cured meat and game to be found around here.





02.8 TAGLIATELLE WITH WILD BOAR SAUCE

Ingredients: bacon, butter, olive oil, onion, celery, carrot, minced pork, lean boar meat (marinated in white or red wine or brandy), salt, black pepper, hot chilli pepper (plenty), skinned tomatoes and tomato concentrate.

Preparation: fry the chopped bacon, onion, celery and carrot in the oil, add the minced meat and the marinated boar. When everything is nearly dry add the chopped tomatoes, the tomato concentrate, salt, black pepper and lots of hot chilli pepper. Simmer for a long time until the sauce is quite thick. Drain the tagliatelle, dress with the sauce and plenty of grated parmesan.

CONTACT