



Provincia di Rimini

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MALATESTA & MONTEFELTRO



RIVIERA DI RIMINI

# ARIMINUM ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISCOVERIES AND JOURNEYS THROUGH THE AREA OF RIMINI

travel notes





## Places to visit and itineraries



### ● Casteldelci

- Casa Museo S. Colarieti

### ● Cattolica

- Museo della Regina
- Archaeological site former fruit and vegetable market (mercato ortofrutticolo)

### ● Novafeltria

- Historical Mining Museum (Museo Storico Minerario Sulphur) (Perticara)

### ● Riccione

- Regional Museum (Museo del Territorio)
- Bridge over the river Melo
- Archaeological site on the grounds of the city pharmacy (farmacie comunali)

### ● Rimini

- City Museum (Museo della Città)
- Archaeological complex of the surgeon's house (Domus del Chirurgo)
- Augustus Arch
- Piazza Tre Martiri
- Tiberius Bridge
- Amphitheatre
- Porta Montanara
- Archaeological site former agricultural consortium (consorzio agrario)
- Archaeological site of Palazzo Massani
- Archaeological site at the Chamber of Commerce (Camera di Commercio)

### ● San Leo

- Church
- Cathedral

### ● Santarcangelo di Romagna

- MUSAS Historical and Archaeological Museum (Museo Storico Archeologico)
- Bridge of San Vito

### ● Verucchio

- Public Archaeological Museum (Museo Civico Archeologico)

## Where to find us



## Distances

Amsterdam 1,405 km

Berlin 1,535 km

Brussels 1,262 km

Budapest 1,065 km

Frankfurt 1,043 km

Copenhagen 1,770 km

London 1,684 km

Munich 680 km

Paris 1,226 km

Prague 1,089 km

Stockholm 2,303 km

Warsaw 1,533 km

Vienna 887 km

Zürich 645 km

Bologna 121 km

Florence 165 km

Milan 330 km

Naples 586 km

Rome 325 km

Turin 447 km

Venice 270 km

**Ariminum**

Archaeological discoveries and  
journeys through the area of Rimini

## **Riviera di Rimini Travel Notes**

Series on tourism published by the  
**Province of Rimini**  
Tourism Department

in cooperation with  
the Cultural Department  
of the Province of Rimini

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Photos taken from the  
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### **With special thanks to the following photographers**

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P. Delucca, S. Di Bartolo,  
L. Fabbrini, R. Gallini, L. Liuzzi,  
G. Mazzanti, T. Mosconi, PH Paritani,  
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### **Graphic Design**

Relè - Tassinari/Vetta  
(Leonardo Sonnoli, Igor Bevilacqua)

### **Cover Photos**

Detail from the "Orpheus" mosaic  
Archaeological site  
*Domus del Chirurgo*, Rimini  
Photos by Emilio Salvatori

### **Acknowledgements**

The Ministry of Cultural  
Heritage and Activities  
The Superintendent for  
Archaeological Heritage  
in the Emilia-Romagna

### **Layout**

Litoincisa87, Rimini

First edition 2011  
Reprint 2017

**Ariminum** is a publication for  
tourist and cultural purposes and  
available **free of charge**

With the contribution of



Special thanks go to Tonino Guerra  
for having allowed us to use the  
drawings - the small fish and the  
apple cut in half - that inspired the  
Riviera of Rimini and Malatesta  
& Montefeltro brands, which  
appear on the entire coordinated  
range of promotional material  
published by the Tourism Council  
of the Province of Rimini.

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Archaeological discoveries and journeys through the area of Rimini

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**ARIMINUM**  
ARCHAEO  
LOGICAL  
DISCOVERIES  
AND  
JOURNEYS  
THROUGH  
THE AREA  
OF RIMINI



## Introduction

Angela Fontemaggi, Orietta Piolanti

The itineraries in this booklet take you on a journey through the history and territory of the province of Rimini, which today also includes the municipalities of Montefeltro in the upper Marecchia valley: **Talamello, San Leo, Maiolo, Novafeltria, Sant'Agata Feltria, Pennabilli and Casteldelci**. In this part of the hinterland we can make discoveries of a unique, rich history lived among powerful fortresses, fortified villages and ancient churches: memories of a region that today is mostly known for its medieval struggle between the Montefeltro and Malatesta families. However, there are also memories of a yet more ancient history to find, from prehistoric and the late Antique times.

The archaeological tours cover natural sights and wine tasting points, touching upon the making of products that are deeply rooted in our history, and show you the places that are famous tourist destinations. Following the footprints of mankind during the millennia people lived in this area, you will be able to get to know the soul of this region that has always been noted for its hospitality. It is a place where cultures meet, the gate to the plain of the Po River, trading place, a hub linking the north and the south, Rome and Europe!

Many surprises await the traveller, from monuments that have long found their place in works of reference for archaeology to streets that were built by consuls and emperors, from the small and large treasures that bear witness to different historical times in the various museums of the province, to the discoveries to be made in the *domus*! From the hinterland to the sea, all the itineraries are designed to enthrall visitors by the display of human and natural resources through the ages until our time. There is room for different approaches during events organised by the museums, among them occasions for family outings and workshops for young and old, for bike tourists and many more. And let's not forget that wherever possible, there are special museum tours and displays for the blind or for people with impaired vision.

The tour suggestions by no means constitute a complete overview of all the potential archaeological sights of the province (that would be impossible), but instead have been chosen to serve as a "magnifying lens", as it were, to focus on a particularly lively and original reality, to offer a way into the heart and the history of this corner of the Romagna.

This new edition was revised to include the treasures found in the new wing of the archaeological part of the city museum of Rimini that was opened in June 2010 and, last but not least, to honour the new municipalities of Montefeltro that have been added.

# SIGNS OF HISTORY

ANGELA FONTEMAGGI



## Tracing primitive man

The history of Rimini begins right on the beach! Let us try to imagine going back in the stream of time, just closing our eyes and reopening them... a million years ago. We would find ourselves on a sandy beach flanked by dunes and interrupted by the pebbly estuaries of rivers and torrents. Behind us stretch patches of conifers alternating with thick grassy vegetation, then oak trees, poplars, birches and open glades, all typical of a temperate humid climate - surroundings in which large mammals (elephants, rhinoceros and bison) roam about, with groups of male "hunters" in their wake.

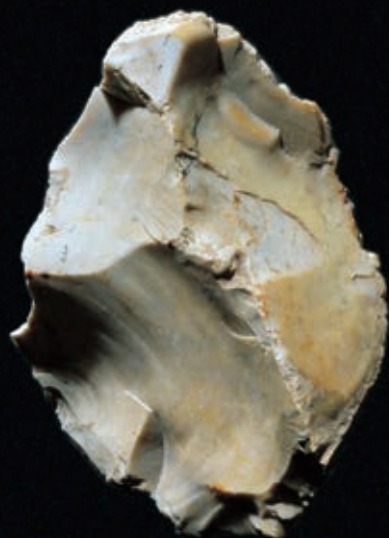
Our quest in discovery of the most ancient inhabitants of the area takes us to the hills of what is now Covignano, but a million years ago was a coastal zone washed by waves sweeping across the plain where Rimini would eventually be built. As the tides advanced and retreated, the waters created the morphological and geological features of the site, depositing strata of sand and gravel.

In this scenario there are also traces of men who lived in the lower Palaeolithic era: a number of such traces, since the object of study by eminent experts, were found in 1968 by Stefano Sabbatini. They are coherent with characteristics present in those unearthed in other sites in the region, particularly those from Monte Poggiolo near Forlì.

The pebbles flaked on one or both sides (choppers and chopper-tools) are the fruit of a veritable "industry" carried on by *homo erectus*, who was skilful at fashioning the pebbles to be found in the rivers and torrents he encountered in his wanderings: this is shown by numerous pieces of stone, fashioned by expert hands to transform them into efficient hunting knives and rudimentary tools.

Evidence of human presence in the Rimini area can be found consistently throughout the Stone Age, an immense time-span marked by environmental and climatic changes. The artefacts found between Riccione and the Valconca dating from the later phase of the lower Palaeolithic Era (200 to 150 thousand years ago), reveal more advanced flaking techniques which resulted in the production of more specialized instruments for use in daily activities, ranging from hunting, butchering the prey, breaking bones, curing skins, picking fruit, collecting roots and preparing rudimentary shelters...

The new Stone Age (Neolithic) which began to influence Romagna approximately halfway through the 5<sup>th</sup> millennium BC advanced up the shores of the Adriatic, together with a cultural revolution brought about by new ways of obtaining food and better techniques in working stone, now polished and sharpened, as well as the introduction of pottery. Age-old





experience as a hunter and predator, in close contact with nature, eventually taught man to take advantage of sheep rearing and agriculture. Periods of nomadic existence alternating with phases of stability dictated by the rhythms of their activities raising animals or crops led individuals to start forming small communities, groups of huts and outhouses suitable for their domestic animals. Other activities developed within the small villages which sprang up along water courses. These included cheese-making, cultivating fields, perfecting the art of working stone and the production of ceramic articles indispensable for the storing and transporting of milk, cheese and seeds...

Fragmentary yet significant evidence telling us about life in these Neolithic groups can be gleaned from pottery with scratched incisions, baked clay (used to plaster the wooden framework of the huts on the inside), flint-stone utensils and parts of shells threaded to make necklaces or pendants... With the presence of man along the coast (in particular above the original coastline or the rocky cliffs), archaeological evidence of the Neolithic Period confirms the function of the territory south of Rimini as forming a cohesive link between the culture of the northern plain and that of the peninsula. It was truly a vital reality where peoples with differing traditions met and mingled.

Approximately half-way through the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium, in the Copper Age with the introduction of the first techniques in metal-working, the territory continued to entertain contact with the Adriatic peninsular culture, as testified by findings of pottery decorated with scales.

The inter-cultural character of the area was consolidated in the Bronze Age (4<sup>th</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC) as a result of metal-working technology and an economy which benefited from trading in copper and tin, as well as from agriculture and sheep and cattle raising. The population prospered along the coastal plain and in the rich pastures on the hillsides.

Along ancient beaten tracks, relations with the mid-Adriatic areas intensified, as did those with the Apennine and sub-Apennine cultures. Often, our knowledge of this ample cultural horizon is limited to artefacts found near the surface of the ground, fragments of pottery, objects in stone, bone or metal, sometimes the remains of settlements: traces of huts and the holes left by poles supporting rectangular habitations have been recorded at Covignano, Misano and Riccione along the Flaminian Way.

The degree of importance reached by metallurgy at the end

Top  
**Ceramic bowl from the  
Bronze Age. Riccione,  
Regional Museum.**

In basso  
**Fibula and a pair of  
earrings made of gold  
and amber. Verucchio,  
Archaeological  
Museum.**

of the Bronze Age is evident from the two deposits found in Camerano of Poggio Berni and Casalecchio of Verucchio, which had been deliberately hidden away to be melted down. These articles prove that in the 10<sup>th</sup> century BC the hilly area around Rimini was directly on commercial routes leading to the north, the Aegean or the Tyrrhenian Seas.

## **The Etruscan Princes of the Marecchia Valley**

The most advanced techniques in metallurgy, precociously derived from the Etruscan presence in the area, were in general use in the prelude to the formation of the Villanovan civilization at Verucchio. This rocky crag was in a strategic position along the route through the Viamaggio Pass connecting Romagna to Etruria - the pole of a new Iron Age culture between the 9<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries BC. Situated inland at the entrance to the Marecchia Valley, but also projected towards the sea along the estuary of the river, Verucchio was able to maintain a wide radius of influence. The Villanovan culture centred in Verucchio penetrated parallel valleys, reaching as far as the Rubicon in the north and the Marano in the south, where it tends to change character as it meets up with the Villanovan "island" of Fermo and the culture around the area of the Piceno

Protagonists of a new civilization, the Villanovans of Verucchio were quick to learn from the agricultural experience of others. First, they adopted the system of densing, a method of fertilizing the land by burning off stubble and any other vegetation which happens to be on it, and then fallowing and crop rotation. Thanks to progress in metallurgy and the diffusion of iron implements, agricultural work could be carried out using new instruments such as the scythe and it seems that more use of animals was being made for work and transport.

Most of the information we have about these people and their Etruscan language comes from exploration of the burial grounds on the steep flanks of the rocky bastion. Here, in a place least suitable for living quarters or cultivation, is where the cities of the dead were located. They represent a veritable mine of information about the life of the times. Archaeological excavations, research on the material brought to light and commitment to the idea of exhibiting the artefacts has led to the creation of a local museum, one of the most important and original in Europe. It gives a stupendous cross-section of Villanovan society,







Top  
**Wooden throne  
from the Lippi  
necropolis. Verucchio,  
Archaeological  
Museum.**

Bottom, left  
**Wooden fan-shaped  
openwork handle  
from the Lippi  
necropolis. Verucchio,  
Archaeological  
Museum.**

Bottom, right  
**Biconical urn  
with openwork  
handle. Verucchio,  
Archaeological  
Museum.**

illustrating the emergence of groups of nobility whose rank on the social scale was based upon activities such as that of a warrior, involvement in government and control of the territory or trading the most profitable products like amber.

The rich assortment of articles accompanying the ashes of the dead - contained in typical biconical funeral urns or recuperated from the large “dolii” in which the dead were interred - offer useful information and trace a sort of identity card of the individual: weapons denote a warrior, whereas jewels, accessories, objects for body-care and instruments of work can be indicative of a woman’s burial place (necklaces, earrings, bracelets, ankle chains, buckles, spindles and whorls...) or a man’s (broaches, razors, weapons and elements from the harness and trappings of a horse or carriage); precious bronze-ware and objects in finely inlaid and decorated wood declare their provenance from well-to-do houses.

The wealth and position of the tombs indicate the role and function of the more prominent persons on the social scale, some of whom could even be defined as “princes”. Men who had distinguished themselves in civic, religious or military walks of life had the most precious and refined personal goods buried with them: fine jewellery, expertly fashioned in precious materials (from bronze, silver and gold to mythical amber), little works of art carried out by local craftsmen to satisfy the tastes and ambitions of the local aristocracy; crested helmets, ceremonial weapons, war chariots and articles symbolizing the most elevated activities, charismatic insignia of power. Bronze tableware and elegant furnishings denote a love of banqueting and convivial occasions to celebrate the excellencies of the individual within the community. It also seems that, in life and after death, important roles were also assigned to women, not only within the domestic domain.

Archaeological data gives us a picture of a society which flourished and grew rich as a result of its control over the territory, external trading and internal distribution of products, foremost of which was precious amber imported from the Baltic and some areas of the Mediterranean.

During the course of the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC Villanovan Verucchio gradually ceded its power-hold to the port on the *Ariminus* (now known as the Marecchia), which had been revitalized by new Etruscan policies in the Adriatic area. As they extended their influence towards the valley and the coastline, the Etruscans met up with a population of an ethnic background which some

On the map:

- A. Augustus Arch
- B. Porta Montanara
- C. Forum
- D. Theatre
- E. Tiberius Bridge
- F. Port
- G. Amphitheatre

The buildings visited during the walks:

- 1. Palazzo Massani, prefecture
- 2. Palazzo Arpesella
- 3. Chamber of Commerce
- 4. The Surgeon's House

- 5. Palazzo Diotallevi
- 6. House on the hillside of the arch
- 7. Domus on the side of the sea (viewed from the arch)

Bottom

Remains of the walls from the Republican era on one side of the Augustus arch.

experts consider was under Umbrian and Piceno influence, whilst others think it came from a much wider Hellenic horizon. Between the 6<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries BC, this “Rimini before Rimini”, in common with the rest of the coastline from the Marches to the Po, was the scene of animated trading with Greek cities, first and foremost Athens, origin of the famous Greek ceramic production. The chest found in Villa Ruffi is emblematic of the multi-ethnic panorama of between the 5<sup>th</sup> century and the spread of Roman influence. This deposit of votive articles, re-discovered in the nineteenth century in the hills of Covignano, reveals the existence of a sort of *pantheon* dedicated to the cult of the gods of war and the waters, a fusion of Etruscan elements with Umbro-Italic and Hellenic features. These articles were sold off by antique merchants and dispersed into various museums in Europe and America. Furthermore, during the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, *Ariminum* (covering more or less the territory of the modern-day province) was also affected by the descent of the Gauls into the northern plain (Padana) in opposition to former Etruscan domination. These are the enemies the Romans would later encounter during their conquest of the lands north of the Apennines.

### ***Ariminum*: foundation**

In 268 BC, a contingent of 6,000 peasants-cum-soldiers along with their families crossed the Apennines to find themselves on the plain at the estuary of the *Ariminus*. Driven by their need for more land, they had abandoned Lazio and Campania to reach the northern strip of the *Ager Picenus et Gallicus*, the territory between Romagna and the Marches which came under Roman rule after the battle of Sentino (295 BC) and the defeat of the Senonne Gauls.

The new arrivals had to fulfil the mission entrusted to them by the Roman Senate, that is to found a Latin colony to be called *Ariminum* from the name of the river on which it was to rise, an independent state allied to the homeland, bounded by the Conca and Rubicon rivers. In less than a century, these pioneers and their descendants transformed the “natural” countryside into an inhabited area similar to the one of today - an orderly geometry of cultivated fields and scattered villages with a network of roads around the city centre, bordered by the blue of the sea, the rivers and the grey demarcation of the walls.

The strategy chosen by the new arrivals to occupy the territory was the same as that practised by the peoples who had gone before them.









So, the city was founded on the natural estuary of the Marecchia which had already been the site of Etruscan, Umbrian and Greek settlements.

### **Caput Viarum, where all journeys start**

The port area was also a confluence of roads leading in different directions: the road along the Valmarecchia (*via Arretina*), the trail through the mountains towards the north and the roads along the coast. This was indeed a privileged location and under the Romans *Ariminum* grew in prestige to become an important military and commercial port, a strategic hub in communications between the north, centre and the peninsula, as well as the starting point for journeys to Central and Eastern Europe. The ancient roadways, with the exception of the *via Arretina* were upgraded to rank as consular roads, which were the motorways of the past, along which conquering forces or economic interests of the Roman State could move with ease: the *Flaminian Way* (220-219 BC) runs from the Milvian Bridge in Rome to the Roman gateway at the southern entrance to *Ariminum*, later (25 BC) to be enhanced by the Arch of Augustus; the *Aemilian Way* (187 BC) which leaves the city from the opposite side passing over the *Ariminus* to cross the Lombardy Plain north-east to Milan; the *via Popilia* (132 BC), which branches off the Flaminia along the coast as far as Aquileia.

The plan of this integrated network of communication was conceived by the Roman Consul Caius Flaminius, the first leader of the *populares*, opposers of the leadership of Senators Marius and Caesar who made *Ariminum* the protagonist of well-known chapters in the history of republican Rome. The Flaminian Way and the colony served as a barred gateway against incursions by the Gauls and also as a launching pad for the conquest of territories on this side of the Alps.

The consular roads still pass through the Rimini area along more or less the same routes as before. They have an artificial basal-stratum in gravel and solid structures, bridges etc. along the way. Even in the past, however, the journey was rendered safer and more comfortable by infrastructures similar to those we have today: milestones in the form of stone columns at the side of the road indicated the distance travelled, the *mutationes* former “petrol stations” where you could get a change of horses and the *mansiones*, which were stopping



Top left

**Amphora with round base. Rimini, City Museum.**

Top right

**Reconstruction of a furnace. Santarcangelo di Romagna, MUSAS.**

Bottom

**Cameo with a profile view of Dionysius, the god of wine, and a carnelian with a depiction of Ceres, goddess of grain crops. Rimini, City Museum.**

places where the traveller could also find accommodation for the night.

This communication system, complemented by a network of local roads, soon became a pole of attraction for minor settlements engaged in productive or trading activities. In Roman times, even the burial grounds were located alongside the principal roads immediately outside any settlement. In this way the funereal monuments would be seen by travellers and the memory of the dead would be perpetuated.

## **The territory**

The consular roads represented a framework on which to organize the territory using the two hundred-juger system. Agricultural land was drained and divided into regular shaped lots of about 710 m. square which was further divided geometrically by straight lines. The lines were traced by ditches, canals, hedges, low walls and country roads to form a system for the intensive cultivation of fertile land. Even areas which did not come under this system were productive: the mountain sides supplied stone, wood and produce obtained from sheep-rearing, whilst in the valleys the oak woods helped to feed the swine tended by the population who then cured the meat in various ways.

The rich hinterland and the abundance of fish in the sea (let us not forget the fish from the Adriatic!) ensured the well-being of the city and since the production more than satisfied the home market, some of it could be traded. In the plain, cereals, vegetables and fruit trees were cultivated, whilst olives groves and vineyards grew on the hills. The vines were lightly pruned and supported by live trees, a method which was probably learned from the Gauls but which actually originated with the Etruscans.

Ancient records sing the praises of the excellent wines produced in the lands south of *Ariminum*: 10 cullei per juger, equal to about 210 hectolitres per hectare! Although of not very high quality a similar yield meant that wine could be exported through a commercial network of ample range, aimed particularly at the popular market of the capital. The intense agricultural activity, at its peak between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD, under a share-cropping system in the imperial age, also gave rise to the production of special containers, small flat-bottomed amphora, ideal for transportation by cart, since distribution was mainly carried out by road.

Kilns producing these amphoras have come to light at Riccione, near Rimini, but above all at Santarcangelo which was, in the imperial era, an “industrial centre” specialized in the production of ceramics (pottery, lanterns and bricks besides amphora).

The division of agricultural land into small and medium-sized farms, making it impossible to accumulate large estates and encouraging an even distribution of the population over the territory, was destined to last for a long time. Maximum prosperity was reached between the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC and the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD. The typical house was a farm: built mainly in brick and poorer materials and including barns, animal sheds and structures for making agricultural products or workshops. Mainly south of Rimini there are some remains of rustic villas, country residences where land-owners lived. They were similar to houses in the city designed for comfort and built with equally refined materials, also having servants’ quarters and workshops. A part of the population also lived in villages (*pagi* and *vici*) which were alimented by agricultural resources and a network of interconnections. San Leo in the Valmarecchia was possibly the ancient *Forum Druentinarum* mentioned by Pliny the Elder. In the 1<sup>st</sup> century it obtained administrative autonomy as a *municipium* (municipality), whilst the area of Secchiano was classified as a *vicus* (village), as is testified by rich archaeological documentation and inscriptions, as well as the frequency of the appellative Vico before many place-names.

Archaeological excavations have unearthed evidence of a village or a large rustic villa on a level area at San Pietro in Cotto, in the Conca Valley between Gemmano and Montefiore. It was in a favourable position overlooking the surrounding countryside and having access to the network of roads between Romagna and the Marche: the artefacts suggest that it was destined for agricultural activities (of extensive imperial possessions?) but there are high-class residential structures and probably also a place of worship.

There are numerous places near Rimini which evoke a sense of the divine, either for their appearance or natural setting: the group of hills at Covignano behind the city, Mount Titano and the rocky outspur of San Leo are emblematic of a divine vocation, evidences of which are still visible in our day. Worship linked to the cult of the waters was practised in the Covignano hills and on the cliffs of San Marino since time immemorial. Procopius, the 4<sup>th</sup> century historian, mentioned San Leo under the name of Montiferetron which







Top

**The ancient forum, formerly Julius Caesar Square, today the piazza Tre Martiri (square of the three martyrs). Rimini.**

Bottom

**A stele from the 15<sup>th</sup> century in memory of Julius Caesar's speech on the forum of Rimini, and a bronze statue of the commander (copy**

**from the 20<sup>th</sup> century). Rimini, piazza Tre Martiri.**

is popularly thought to indicate that it was consecrated to Zeus the Thunderer - inscriptions speak of a temple dedicated to the goddess *Fonta*, a theatre, a spa and veneration of the Italic *Dei publici*, chosen in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD as a banner raised against the threat posed by new arrivals in the area, followers of oriental cults. By means of a process of assimilation, Christian doctrine was grafted on to this pagan worship; the legends about Marino and Leo, two stone-cutters who arrived in Rimini from Dalmatia and who are reputed to have evangelized the territory, suggest that the new faith spread from the east coast of the Adriatic to the Valmarecchia. At the same time, this tradition explains the fortunes of San Leo and San Marino in the late ancient period, since they were natural strongholds guarding lines of communication between Ravenna, Rimini and the Valtiberina, places which became emerging centres of importance for the militarization of the territory during the wars of the Byzantine Goths.

## **The city of Ariminum**

Founded at the convergence of different routes of communication and focal point of the lively economy in the area, the historic centre of the city of *Ariminum* still bears recognizable signs of its original physiognomy. It has a network of criss-crossing streets (*cardines* and *decumani*) which create rectangular blocks (*insulae*) destined to accommodate buildings. The main axes of the street plan are the *cardo maximus* (via Garibaldi and IV Novembre), which links the *via Arretina* to the port on the estuary (near Piazzale Clementini), and the *decumanus maximus* (Corso d'Augusto), which connects the Flaminian Way to the Aemilia. At their point of intersection, in correspondence with the present Piazza Tre Martiri, was the Forum, the heart of public life and business transactions. Archaeological findings provide interesting data which help us to imagine the square as it was originally. It extended further in the direction of the sea to what is now Via San Michelino in Foro with important buildings all around: the basilica, which was where legal and business activities were administrated in Roman times, and a theatre, built in the time of Augustus in the first block towards the north. The scenario included honorary monuments, statues and inscriptions in memory of emperors and benefactors of the community. Tradition has it that right here in the *Ariminum* theatre Julius Caesar made his famous speech to his soldiers after they had crossed the state boundary and were preparing to march on the capital.



Enclosed on three sides by the Marecchia, the Ausa (the river once flowed through what is now Parco Cervi but its course has since been diverted) and the sea (which in those days came up to modern-day railway line), the colony soon grew to reach the limits which would mark its boundaries, without significant change, until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. After a short time, its role as a military outpost led to the provision of adequate defences, at least on the south side, the most exposed to attack: solid walls with long straight sides and square towers were built with blocks of the local sandstone. Further work on the walls guaranteed their efficiency in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD during the civil wars in which Rimini sided with Marius 1<sup>st</sup> and after suffered reprisals from Silla. When peace was restored in the time of Augustus the function of the ancient walls ceased to exist and it was not until the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD under pressure from the first waves of barbaric invasion that a new wall enclosing the city on all sides was built in brick.

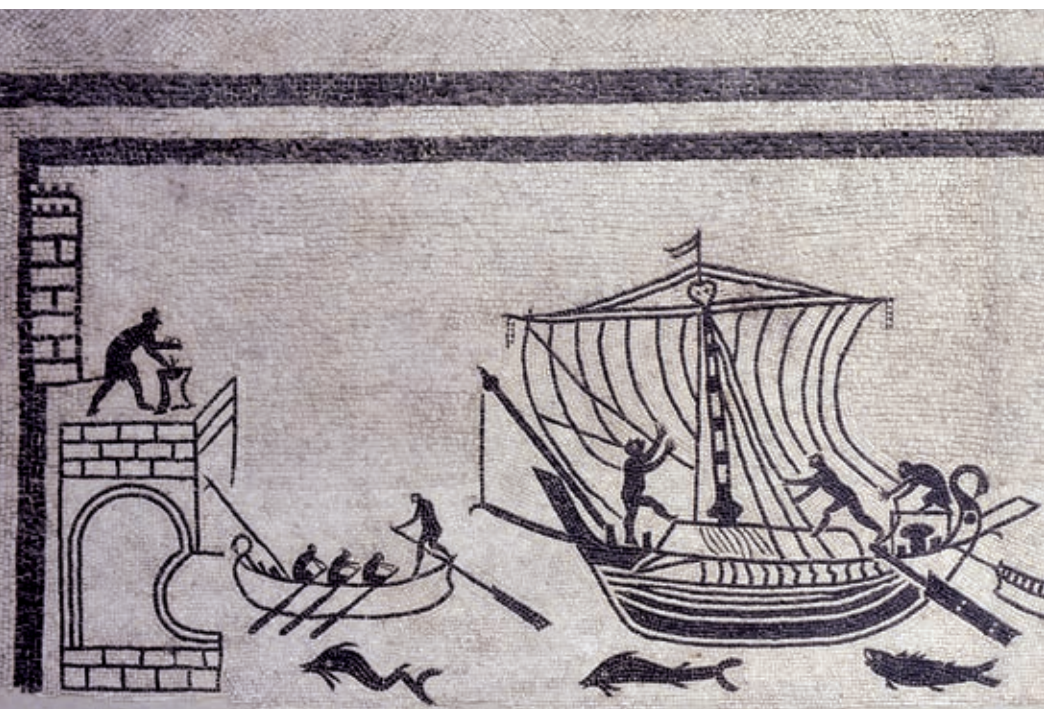
The gates of the city were located in correspondence with the principal streets inside the walls: Porta Montanara at the extremity of the *cardo maximus* where it joined the *Via Arretina* and Porta Romana at the confluence of the Flaminian Way and the *decumanus maximus*. This latter gateway would be later demolished in 27 AD when the Arch of Augustus was erected by the Roman Senate in honour of Octavius and to celebrate the restoration of the main roads across the empire.

Although *Ariminum* had already been a Roman *municipium* since the beginning of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, it was under Augustus that it took on full dignity as a splendid imperial city: besides the creation of its monumental entrances through the Arch of Augustus and over the Marecchia bridge, later completed by Tiberius, Octavius promoted the paving of the city streets, the extension of the aqueduct and sewage system, drainage of an entire quarter to the south of the city, and repairs to the Aemilian Way as well as encouraging private building projects... Also the founding of the Augustan Colony, when veterans faithful to the *Princeps* arrived to alimnt the ranks of a new leadership and revitalized the city and the surrounding territory, transforming it into a vast building site. However, it is in the area around the Forum where the urban plan promoted by Augustus was centred to express, by means of its monumental constructions, the culture, power and order of the empire: on arrival from Rome, access to the centre would be made through a large archway which









Top  
**The Roman  
amphitheatre.  
Rimini.**

Bottom  
**The harbour entrance  
with ships arriving  
(detail from a mosaic  
found in the palazzo  
Diotallevi). Rimini,  
City Museum.**

marked the entrance into a “pedestrian island” where heavy carts could not circulate, whilst the theatre was located on the other side of the square.

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> century, a difference in attitude and intentions was expressed by another emperor, very probably Hadrian, who was responsible for the building of the amphitheatre. This last great imperial construction was erected on the eastern perimeter of *Ariminum* to stage gladiatorial spectacles which would attract a numerous and enthusiastic crowd. These buildings were instrumental in integrating the population of the city and its territory with the different peoples coming in from other regions of the empire. About a hundred years later, the State crisis and the terror aroused by the barbarians would put an end to spectacles in the amphitheatre. The construction was built into the walls and transformed into a military fortress.

## **The domus of Ariminum**

If the public character of the city is reflected by its monuments, the houses describe the private life of a society which had undergone profound changes in eight centuries under Roman rule. In the Republican Era, simple functional buildings expressed a rather austere way of life, whilst in the 1<sup>st</sup> century of the empire the *domus* (single family residences with one or two floors) became common with an *atrium - peristylum* (respectively an entrance with an open roof to collect rain-water and a porticoed garden) which evidenced contact with Greek culture and the spread of the pleasures of the *otium*. Towards the middle of the imperial age the *domus* were transformed. They now had ample space for the *triclinia* (banqueting hall) and gardens complete with ornamental pools and garden furniture which were a status symbol denoting the wealth of the owner. Meanwhile, the city with its multi-ethnic and multi-cultural background continued to flourish. Finally, between the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries, luxurious residences belonging to officials of the Court at Ravenna were established. These last *domus* were scattered throughout the city in a more loosely-knit residential context. They were built on the model of an imperial palace: characterized by various wings constructed around ample courtyards adorned with fountains. The reception rooms were arranged according to a complex plan so that access could be effected according to a complicated visiting ceremonial.

Let us just imagine for a moment that we could enter one of these

residences in the Rimini of imperial times: the colours of the frescos on the walls and ceilings would stand out against ample areas of monochrome walls, often divided into panels where elements of various kinds were illustrated, or patterned similar to wallpaper. Our attention would further be attracted by the floors which were chosen to suit the function of the room and the layout of the internal space: in open areas or those destined for services, they were functional and resistant, in terra-cotta tiles or beaten earth mixed with rubble and cement, sometimes decorated with mosaic tesserae; on the other hand, the rooms used by the *dominus* and his family would either be floored in black-and-white precious marble or coloured mosaic. There is an extremely rich repertoire of ornamental geometric or figurative patterns to be found in the over one hundred examples of mosaics conserved in the City Museum. The standard of life, the tastes and even the culture and religious tendencies of the inhabitants was evident from the furnishings, the many statues, utensils and objects for the care and the adornment of the person.

A unique example has come to light as a result of excavations in Piazza Ferrari. It gives us a picture of what life was like in this location to the north of the Roman city in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD up to the Middle Ages. The most striking find was that of a *domus* of imperial times which, as revealed by the over 150 surgical instruments brought to light, also included a *taberna medica* (doctor's surgery). The "surgeon's" *domus* suffered unexpected destruction by fire, perhaps during one of the barbarian invasions which put to fire and sword entire urban areas in Romagna. *Ariminum* did not escape this climate of instability and unrest: the abandoning of the *domus* buried under a layer of rubble and the building of the city walls testifies as much.

Between the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries the city regained its composure due to the protective vicinity of Ravenna, which had become the capital of the Western Roman Empire in 402. Proof of this tranquillity is provided by a sumptuous palace with spacious heated rooms and mosaic flooring, parts of which have been found on the front of the same block as the "surgeon's" *domus*, which was covered in earth and left more or less intact at the time of the building of the later palace.

However, this building, as others in the area, did not last over the middle of the 6<sup>th</sup> century: they suffered rapid decline and finally abandon at the time of the terrible war between the Goths and the Byzantines which marked the end of the Roman Era and opened that of the Middle Ages.





# THE ITINERARIES

ORietta PIOLANTI

The tours have been created for adults (itinerary ✱) and, where specified, can also be adapted for children, with suitable methodologies and workshop experiences (itinerary ☆) and, in one of its forms, to accommodate blind visitors (itinerary ●) in a kind of Museum of Touch.

There are three itineraries for cycling tourers based around the network of cycle paths in the province of Rimini.

Info: [www.piste-ciclabili.com/provincia-rimini](http://www.piste-ciclabili.com/provincia-rimini)

(Itinerary ✱).



*tour for adults*



*tour for children*



*tour for blind visitors*



*tour for cycling tourers*

## 1. On the trail of Primitive Man

1 or 2 days



The itinerary:

### **Rimini**

City Museum - Archaeological Section

### **Riccione**

Local Museum - Prehistoric Section



At the end of the tours children may participate in the following workshops:

City Museum: *Stone chipping / clay modelling workshop, as if in a Stone Age settlement*

Local Museum: *Bones, teeth and shells: charms and jewels from prehistoric times*

The itinerary leads off from the **City Museum**, which houses Rimini's historical, artistic and archaeological heritage, and is located in an eighteenth- century Jesuit college and in the **Archaeological Section** (around 40 rooms, 30 of which were opened in June 2010), we come face



to face with the most ancient of our ancestors. The splintered flint stone pebbles on display are evidence of the presence of the *homo erectus* who walked the beach of Covignano a million years ago. This same beach is now the hill behind Rimini, but was once the coastline bordering the sea which submerged the plane where the city was to be built. And it is this very flint which provides the answers to many of the questions we may have regarding the life led by our forefathers. Near the land's waterways and on its pebbly shores, primitive man mimicked nature's rhythms and laws and so learned to transform **flint** stones (the most commonly used material in the **Palaeolithic Age**, as well as other perishable resources such as wood, leather, and bone...) into ever sharper and more cutting instruments, using the **splintering** technique, then retouching and smoothing them. He fashioned increasingly complicated arms and tools, attached to shafts made of wood or bone, suitable for hunting, slaughtering, crushing bones to extract the marrow, chopping down trees, digging up roots, and eventually softening and hoeing the ground when the new Stone Age saw the advent of agricultural practices.

Continuing our journey through time, we note how the cultural and environmental changes which took place were accompanied by important technological transformations. In this way, one of the factors underlying the innovative process known as the "**Neolithic revolution**" is the introduction of **pottery** for the production of containers.

Pottery was a new element in a society which was changing thanks to the cultivation of the surrounding vegetation, farming, increasingly longer periods of sedentary life, and the creation of a community. In this context working with clay becomes extremely important, as it is a functional element required by the new economy based on primitive forms of **agriculture** and on the **production of dairy products**. Modelled by hand (the potter's wheel would only begin to be widely used in Italy in the Iron Age), pottery made use of local resources: clay, water and wood for the rudimentary furnaces in which the pieces were baked. Using cakes of **clay** ready purified in water to eliminate any impurities, pottery vase forms were produced both by **free hand**, and also using the "**colombino**" or "**lucignolo**" techniques, which involved modelling the vases by winding a long roll of clay in a spiral, then attaching this to a flat base. Such production techniques allowed the potter to realise **simple forms** (cups and containers), which could be used for specific activities such as cheese-making. Once modelled, the vase could be decorated by pressing one's fingers or nails on the surface which was still pliable or by using pointed tools, according to Adriatic-peninsular influences and, even if not so strongly, the western "square mouthed vases".



Top  
**Bronze pruning knives  
from the “storeroom”  
in Poggio Berni.  
Rimini, City Museum.**

Bottom  
**Attic vase with red  
painting and a spout.  
Riccione, Regional  
Museum.**

The passage to the Bronze Age is marked by pottery with a scaly decoration, this too influenced by Adriatic peninsular cultures, and by instruments in smoothed stone such as hatchets, axe hammers and arrowheads.

The exhibits take us on through the **Bronze Age**, a long period starting from around 2300, which heralds the development of technology, as well as considerable social and economic changes: we can see many examples of pottery vases, recovered from the remains of huts discovered at Covignano, proof of a settlement consisting of houses supported by a system of wooden stakes and clay walls.

But the most striking elements are undoubtedly the two “**cupboards**”, one from Camerano di Poggio Berni, in the valley of the Uso, and the other from Casalecchio di Verucchio, in the valley of the Marecchia: these are warehouses of bronze hidden in isolated places, a phenomenon well-known in Europe, especially between the late Bronze Age and the early Iron Age. Apart from the beautiful axe matrix, there is a great quantity and variety of objects in the “cupboards”, including arms, jewels, instruments for personal care, work tools, lumps of bronze, ingots and production waste: mixed contents, which probably belonged to the artisans taking part in commercial exchange programs between Etruria and the Northern Adriatic area. These were able to recast the metal, during long journeys in which technological conquests, as well as economic and cultural contacts were spreading across a land which may then have been sparsely inhabited, but which not long afterwards would give birth to the Villanovan centre of Verucchio.

There are several rooms in the **Riccione Museum**, set up in 1990 inside the Centro Culturale della Pesa, which are dedicated to the evolution of the territory’s geology and the most ancient of the populations in the land lying south of Rimini: a tale which tells of millions of years ending in the Roman experience.

The tour illustrates the transformation of the coastal area and of the Valle del Conca; it reconstructs Palaeolithic settings and documents the presence of Man in prehistory. Stones which have been splintered using an evolved technique lead us back to the final phase of the **Palaeolithic age** in which scrapers were particularly frequent. The remains of hut settlements (like that discovered during construction of the Santa Monica racetrack

at Misano Adriatico along the Agina rivulet) offer interesting glimpses of the Neolithic age, of the first stable dwellings and the new agro-pastoral economy: more crafted flint stones tell us about daily life, as do terracotta vases and objects made from bone, while archaic forms of spirituality and a sense of aestheticism can be seen in the jewellery created from pierced shells, clay, bones and wood... these were said to boast magic powers which stood up to evil spirits in a “religious sentiment” linking man to nature. As we continue, alongside the scarce evidence of the Eneolithic age - a period in which metallurgy made its entrance, commercial exchanges grew and work took an ever more articulate form - we unravel proof of the **Bronze** and **Iron Ages**, in the form of pottery production and metal craft. These materials illustrate a cultural horizon permeated by the Apennine Culture (and therefore by an economy linked to sheep-farming and the rhythms of transhumance) but at the same time influenced by the *terramaricola* Culture (that of the villages in the vast flatlands of the north, where agriculture was highly developed). The relationship with the two cultures can be seen in the **pottery** and in the **tools for working** the fields, small hoes and scythes, made from bone and metal. And if during the first part of the Iron Age the land of Riccione appears insignificant compared to the importance of Valmarecchia, provided by Verucchio becoming the epicentre of Villanova, the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC holds significant clues which imply a **Greek presence** in the area, engaged in lively maritime business, while elements of Celtic culture are to be found in the contents of a **Gallic tomb** of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC, discovered in Misano.



## 2. The signs of power: Etruscan princes from the Marecchia Valley

1 day



The itinerary:

### **Verucchio**

City Archaeological Museum



The guided tour of the exhibition includes the showing of an animated video illustrating the funeral rite ceremony of the “lord” of the Lippi 89 tomb, the contents of which are exhibited in the throne room.

We would recommend that children take the tour:

*Communicating with images: the throne of Verucchio*

Going back up the **Marecchia**, around 18 Km from Rimini, we come across **Verucchio**, built on a rock which juts out, dominating the valley. Situated on the boundary with Montefeltro and the Republic of San Marino, in a strategic position from a defence point of view and in relation to the roads linking it to the valle del Tevere and the Tyrrhenian mountain side, Verucchio still shows the scars of its history, a history which proved most intense in the early Iron Age, with the blossoming of the **Villanovan Culture**, and in

Top  
**The settlement of Verucchio in the Marecchia valley.**

Bottom  
**Crested terracotta helmet and a bronze and amber fibula, from the country estate of Lavatoio.**

**Verucchio, Archaeological Museum.**

the Middle Ages, a period in which it became the residence of the Malatesta lordship. If the impressive **Rocca** is the place which best evokes the power of the Malatesta family, the long experience of the Villanovans is instead collected and recognized in the local **City Archaeological Museum**, inside the former Sant'Agostino Monastery, build in the 12<sup>th</sup> century and extended in the 17<sup>th</sup> century with the construction of the Church and the spinning mills. Inside the building there is splendid evidence of the rich **tombs** which testify to the supremacy of an elite consisting of **warrior princes**. Each hall describes this civilization through the exhibits kept in the **necropoles** which grew up along the hillside, and there are many display cases which allow the visitor the chance to stop and “meet” the Etruscan princes which lived here between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries BC. Effective educational support material helps us to define a character of high lineage whose duties also included a military commitment, as denoted by the presence of ceremonial arms alongside offensive or defensive arms. In particular, tombs 85 and 89 of the **Lippi necropolis** (the most consistently used amongst those from Verucchio) are paradigmatic of the **personal objects** which accompanied individuals of a princely status, both men and women. The **funereal rite**, a mine of information on the “identity” of the deceased, offers in these cases an unrivalled ostentation of wealth through objects of grand prestige and value. Think of the **wooden thrones** (preserved in exceptionally good condition thanks to the chemical composition of the soil), and in particular the example of tomb 89 with its narration of scenes linked to the wool production cycle, its spinning and weaving, finely carved into the high back. Further proof of the status of the lords of Verucchio can be found in the **clothing** and **personal effects**, as well as the elements relative to **carriages** and **horse trappings** and to the precious **sets of bronze vases**. These are objects which express familiarity with the Etruscan world and which, together with the way the tomb and the entire funereal ritual was organized, allow us to understand the owner’s important role in society, and his high economic and cultural position. The case of the double “function” of the cinerary and of the dolium of tomb 26 of the Moroni-Semprini necropolis, is emblematic- an obvious message, together with other significant elements in the objects which accompany the corpse, of the social level held by the individual.

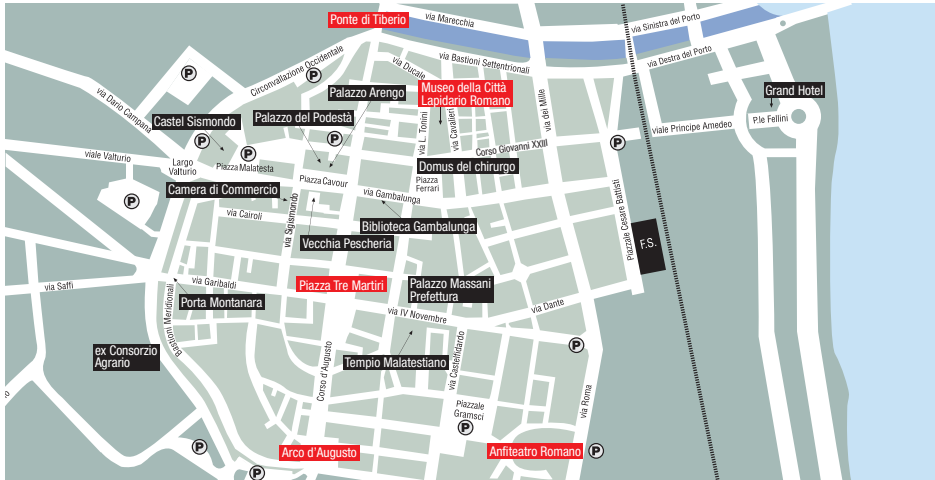


Further signs of the power and wealth of the “princes” of Verucchio, are the products from the **goldsmith**, actual jewels of a craftsmanship which reached its peak between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries: **gold**, worked according to the most advanced techniques of the time, gleams at the visitor from the various belt buckles and surprising earrings! And besides the glass cameos of necklaces and pendants which spreads warm colour, we stumble upon the mythical **amber**, a gift from the gods as consolation for the death of Fetonte, son of the Sun. Verucchio owes part of its development to this very substance: the town became a distribution and production point for this fossil resin which, thanks to its translucency, intense colour range and therapeutic qualities, was destined to become one of the favourites of the lords of the local community.



### 3. Signs of power: Leaders of mercenaries and Roman emperors in the history of Ariminum

1 day



The itinerary:

#### Rimini

City Museum - Archaeological Section - Roman lapidary  
(a tour also suitable for blind visitors)/  
Augustus Arch/piazza Tre Martiri/Tiberius Bridge/Amphitheatre



Hot on the tracks of the main players in Roman history who linked their name to *Ariminum*, this tour takes off from the **Archaeological Section of the City Museum**. It is here that one can still hear the echo of the epic battles fought between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> century BC when, thanks to its border location, the city took on an important role in the politics of Rome. But this role was one overshadowed by historical sources in a series of tales which allude to famous episodes: the conquests of the consul **Flaminius** and his anti-senatorial actions, the victory of Marius against the invasion of the Germanic tribe of Cimbri, the crossing of the Rubicone by the army headed by **Julius Caesar**...

Behind these events, the archaeological evidence present allows us to

Top  
**Bust of Augustus  
and epigraph on the  
pavement of a street.  
Rimini, City Museum.**

Bottom  
**Mosaic “degli scudi”  
from the domus to the  
hillside of the arch.  
Rimini, City Museum.**

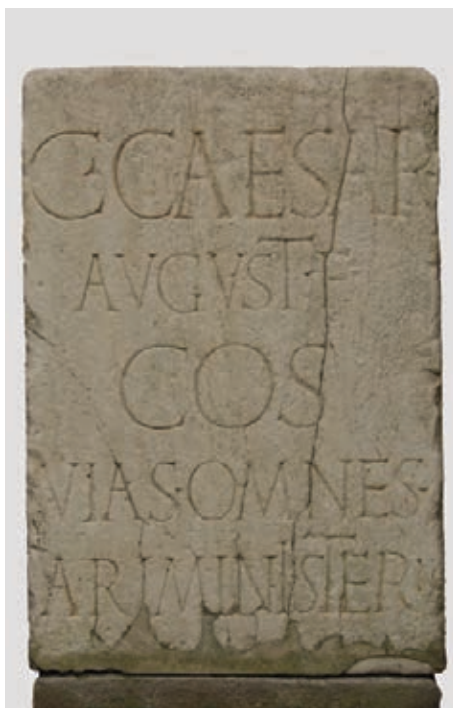
reconstruct *Ariminus* in the centuries as a republic: back then the city saw its institutional profile change from Latin colony to *municipium*, changed its social structure for the influx of new *gentes*, opened itself up to maritime businesses stretching as far as the Aegean sea, and renewed the image of the city with the creation of **monumental buildings**.

The same **Octavian Augustus**, immortalised in a marble **bust**, introduced the first imperial age. An outline of the political figure of Augustus and his commitment for an organisational program of urban interventions and road networks can be reconstructed using references gleaned from the museum tour and from the city itself. In terms of the coherence of his plans, the **model of the Archway** represents the original design of the first great work delivered to *Ariminum*, while the **casts of the clipei** with the divinities present an amazing attention to detail considering their huge dimensions. The remains of an imposing column in stone-cold marble and a large terracotta container belong to the **theatre**, today almost completely cancelled from the urban fabric.

“Notices” sporting propaganda for the requalification of the road system appear as the **milestone** located at the 7th mile from the city to commemorate the paving of Via Emilia carried out in 2 BC by Augustus, and the **milestone** which celebrates the paving of the city streets promoted by his nephew Caio Caesar in 1 AD is now on display in the Roman Lapidary. The renewal initiated by Ottaviano also involved non-public projects: the buildings in the area around the Arco d’Augusto are of symbolic, refined construction with heating systems, ornamental fountains, apsidal settings and mosaics rendered precious by the use of marble slabs. The most ancient phase of the **domus** discovered at **monte dell’Arco** dates back to the **Augustan era**. In the **mosaic floors**, which mostly have a black background, the complex geometric decorations are reserved for the **thresholds**; one of the main settings presents the design of crossed hexagonal shields, perhaps in reference to the military commitment of the *dominus*.

The elegant mosaic with marine monsters inside the central medallion comes from the **maritime Archway**. Stone-clad tanks and fountain **wall mosaics** identify the system as a heating system.

The tour continues through the city with the visit to the Archway at the end



of via Flaminia and to the Ponte sul Marecchia, the symbolic monuments of Rimini commissioned by Ottaviano Augustus.

The **Augustus Arch**, erected in 27 BC as the city gateway, honours the figure and the politics of Ottaviano, starting from the **inscription** which praises him for the restoration of via Flaminia. The whole structure, covered in Istrian stone, presents strong religious and propagandist characteristics: the architecture reflects that of the temple, while the opening of the door, so huge it could not be closed by panels, proclaims the peace obtained in 31 BC with the defeat of Antonio in the battle of Azio.

The **decorative apparatus**, including the panel of the gable, is full of symbols; the divinities in the clipei (Jupiter and Apollo on the outside, Neptune and Rome towards the city) exalt the power of Rome and the grandeur of Augustus. Originally set into the stone **city wall**, whose remains are visible, the Archway was topped by an *attico* with the statue of the emperor on horseback or on a chariot; in the Middle Ages the summit of the Arch was adorned with the merlons which survive today.

In the forum, nowadays known as piazza Tre Martiri, the archaeological findings visible in the spaces saved from the paving remind us that in the age of Augustus the **paving in chalky stone** covered the whole square, closed in on the north by the theatre in brickwork and on the southern side by the archway which signalled its entry; the **basilica** rose on the side adjacent to the sea, across from what is now via San Michelino in foro.

But the square is also dominated by the memory of **Julius Caesar**, evoked by two modern signs, the **statue in bronze** and the **stone milestone** at the head of via IV Novembre. According to tradition (but never confirmed in any report written by the general himself), he would harangue his army in the very forum of *Ariminum* following the passage of the Rubicon. And it is from this version of events that we learn about a huge stone which Caesar stood upon to address the troops, a stone which, up until the last war, was located on the milestone erected in 1555 in memory of the event.

Our journey on Octavian's trail continues at the **bridge** initiated by Augustus in 14 AD and terminated in 21 AD by his successor Tiberius, as we are reminded by the **inscription** on the inside parapets. The bridge was constructed using Istrian stone, and is more than 70 m long and stretches over 5 archways resting on sturdy **piers with breakwater spurs**, all oblique compared to the street direction in to combat the strength of the current, following its flow. The bridge is a starting point for *via Aemilia* and *via Popillia*. It is an imposing structure, thanks to its engineering and architectural design which unites its practical, functional role with the harmony of the forms used to exalt the emperors.



Such exaltation can be seen in the inscription and in the sober decorative elements which emphasise the emperor's civil power (the laurel wreath and the shield) and religious power (the lituus, or priest's wand, the jug and the patera for carrying out sacrifices).

If Augustus' interventions can be considered examples of political and cultural planning true to Roman tradition, the construction of the **Amphitheatre** by the emperor **Hadrian** in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD is an example of the *panem et circenses* strategy, or the quest for the widest of public approval and the lightening of social tension by affording the people moments of collective distraction. The remains of this grand building, which played host to the *ludi gladiatorii*, are the most important remains in the whole Region. The monument rose in a peripheral area, near the port and its location made it easily accessible by road, facilitating the flow of those visitors reaching it by land. An oval, concrete structure clad with bricks and reaching more than 15 m. in height, the building was composed of two orders, one on top of the other, composed of 60 archways. It had the capacity to host more than 10,000 spectators, and boasted a **clay arena** a little smaller than that of the Coliseum. After not much more than a century of use, the structure, whose **north-eastern section** still remains standing, ceased to function and was incorporated into the walls erected when the city attempted to ward off the threat of the barbarians.

## 4. *Caput viarum* [the starting point for all roads]

1 or 2 days



The Itinerary:

### **Cattolica**

Archaeological Park, Former Produce Market/Museum of the Queen

### **Riccione**

Bridge of the Rio Melo River/Archaeological Park of the Council  
Pharmacy/Museum of the Territory

### **Rimini**

Augustus Arch/Montanara Gate/City Museum  
Tiberius Bridge

### **San Vito**



For children with their families, we recommend the workshop:  
Museum of the Queen of Cattolica, *The Trip*

The first habitation within the territory of Rimini encountered by travellers coming from the south along the **via Flaminia** was on the site of present-day Cattolica. It was here that at the end of the first century BCE, during

the years in which Augustus was carrying out the maintenance work commemorated in the inscription on the Arch at the end of the road, a **mansio** was established, a “service station” for travellers with their horses. In the **park of the former square of the Produce Market** one may see the remains unearthed by the archaeological excavations of the 1960s: **basins paved with terracotta tiles, water-drainage channels** and a **well** were in use up until the middle of the third century CE, when a fire, linked to the first barbarian invasions, signalled the decline of the habitation. The finds from this and other excavations are on view in the **Museum of the Queen**, divided into two sections: archaeological and maritime. A visit to the archaeological rooms introduces the life of the habitation: beverage **containers** evoke the *taberna* [Latin for “inn”] within the *mansio*, a rustic **mosaic** recalls the artisan vocation of the site and the remains of the **well** evoke the act of drawing water, while **painted plaster**, worked marble, **furnishings** and personal objects sketch an image of the village that rose up around the rest area.

On the road towards Rimini, once past Misano and the Fontanelle site - from which originate, respectively, the mile post at mile 211 from Rome and the inscription celebrating the works promoted by Domitian in 93 CE. - the archaeological testimonies that signal the progression of the road, which in great part coincides with today’s state road, are ever more numerous. Immediately after the Riccione cemetery, beneath the current viaduct over the **Rio Melo** river, one can view the arcade of the **masonry bridge** that passed over the flow of water in ancient Roman times.

The itinerary continues up until San Lorenzo in Strada, where the road, with a sharp curve, turns again towards the sea. Archaeological finds confirm the existence of a village in the area around this very curve - which tradition identifies as *Vicus Popilius* - specialized in the production of **architectural terracotta** for the decoration of religious and civic buildings.

It is worth a stop to visit the **excavation area of the Council**

**Pharmacy**: reconstruction drawings bring the diverse phases of the site to life, from the first signs of activity in the Iron Age to its use as a lime-kiln in Late Antiquity.

The remains from the habitation of San Lorenzo in Strada and from the necropolis along the via Flaminia are held in the **Museum of the Territory of Riccione**. Among the most original finds are a **large masonry chest** which held the funerary fire and then the ashes with the grave goods, and the burnt remains of a **funerary bed of decorated bone** depicting winged cupids, draped figures and a horse.

The route picks up again articulated by the local place-names (al Terzo,





Top  
**Mosaic in irregular cut stones, and plaster fragment showing feet. Cattolica, Museo della Regina (the Queen's Museum).**

Centre left  
**Terracotta with Satyr and Menade from San Lorenzo in Strada. Rimini, City Museum.**

Centre right  
**Urns from tombs in the necropolis in via Flaminia. Riccione, Regional Museum.**

Bottom  
**The Roman bridge of the Melo river. Riccione.**

Colonnella) and by the **columnar mile markers** at the first and third mile from Rimini: deprived of their text, one is located at Miramare, and the other near the church of the Colonnella.

No evidence remains of the **necropolis**, the most ancient and monumental of *Ariminum*, that flanked the consular road for more than a mile beyond the city walls.

A spectacular conclusion of the via Flaminia is provided by the **Arch** erected by Augustus more than two thousand years ago (see Itinerary no. 3). Having accepted the invitation offered by the vast arch to enter the city, one reaches, at the far end of the *cardo maximus* (via Garibaldi), the **Montanara Gate**. The remains, gathered a few dozen metres up from the original site, which is evidenced in the paving of the street, belong to the sandstone gate built in the first century BCE at the entrance to the via *Arretina*. Originally featuring a double arch with an internal guard court separating the two gates, the construction was reduced to a single arch by the second century CE.

The itinerary picks up again at the **Roman Epigraphic Museum** within the City Museum, in front of the most ancient **funerary monuments** from the necropolis of the via Flaminia, in the typical “cube tomb” style: the sepulchres of the *Ovii* and of the *Maecii* offer a veritable mine of information about *Ariminum* in the early first century BCE, a flourishing and multi-ethnic city. During the empire, less stately sepulchral typologies were in use, such as stele, funerary stones, urns and sarcophagi, a sign of the evolution of a more intimate and private funerary rite, in part related to the diffusion of eastern religions.

On view at the Epigraphic Museum are the already mentioned **marble tablet** from Fontanelle di Riccione, from which the name of the emperor Domitian was effaced following the *damnatio memoriae* (posthumous condemnation), and a collection of inscribed **mile markers**, manifestations of imperial propaganda.

Entering the **archaeological section**, take the opportunity to linger over the **architectural terracottas**, elements belonging to the decorative covering of wooden roof structures, prevalently found in cult edifices. Among the numerous examples of the industrial activity around Rimini, one can admire the discoveries of 1866 in San Lorenzo in Strada, valuable

Top  
**Cubic funeral monument and funerary goods from the necropolis in via Flaminia. Rimini, City Museum.**

Bottom  
**Remains of the bridge over the Uso river in San Vito.**

evidence of the local workshops active between the second and first centuries BCE. If the signs and funerary inscriptions in the Epigraphic Museum speak of the life of the defunct and the grieving of loved ones, continuing the museum tour the display of grave goods reveals the position of the individual in reference to death. The information offered by a group of eleven **sepulchres**, dated between the third and first centuries BCE, is valuable for its antiquity. The tombs were unearthed in the **park of the former Agrarian Consortium**, a few dozen metres from the section of the Roman wall between the Montanara Gate and the Arch of Augustus. The solemn **statue of a togate figure**, which belongs to the aedicule class of monuments that is well-documented in Sarsina, quotes the tomb as status-symbol emphasized in architectural forms by the personalities emergent in *Ariminum* during the first century BCE.

More than three hundred tombs were brought to light during the excavations of the **necropolises of the via Flaminia** in the 1990s. The archaeological documentation offers a revealing exemplification of the funerary rituals and ceremonies in practice between the first and third centuries CE: amphora necks and terracotta and lead tubes inserted into the ground to permit offerings to reach the level of the grave express the touching tie that united the living with the dead. The grave goods, present in less than half of the sepulchres, are for the most part comprised of few objects: **coins**, the so-called "offering of Caronte", balsam containers for perfumed essences and **lanterns** for the illumination of the voyage beyond the tomb.

The itinerary retakes the road on the traces of the *via Aemilia* that exited the city, together with the *via Popillia*, crossing the Marecchia River via the **ponte di Tiberio (Tiberius Bridge)** (see Itinerary no. 3).

After its departure from the coastal *Popillia*, probably at Le Celle, the *Aemilia* entered, as it does today, the northern plain, keeping to the foothills and passing through territory shaped by the Roman subdivision of public agrarian land that was centred on the road itself.

At S. Giustina take the *via Emilia Vecchia*, a short deviation tracing back to the work carried out by Augustus in the year 2 BCE, as recalled by the mile marker discovered at San Vito at the seventh mile from *Ariminum*, on view in the City Museum. The emperor's motivation for modifying this road with respect to the more ancient one, coinciding with the progression of



today's state road, remains unclear. What is certain is that in this way the consular road avoided the artisan centre of Santarcangelo, where there was a concentrated production of bricks, amphorae and ceramics.

The columnar mile marker was found near the ancient **bridge of the Uso torrent** of which some remains still exist, not far from the parish church. Archaeological research verified that the brickwork arches of the Malatesta era stress the remains of a Roman bridge made of stone blocks. The bridge, probably from the Augustan age, seems to have been monumental in form, with dimensions greater than those of the Tiberius bridge in Rimini (around eight or nine arches!). A symbolic value of great relevance must have therefore been attributed to the structure. This would sustain the hypothesis that identifies the Uso torrent as the ancient Rubicon. This river, celebrated by Caesar, demarcated the confine of the Roman state during the Republic, shifted to the Alps by Augustus after the union of ancient Italy with Cisalpine Gaul. This was a political union that the emperor may have wanted to celebrate with the construction of the monumental bridge connecting the two regions.



## 5. The archaeological site of Piazza Ferrari: A little Pompei in the heart of Rimini

1 day



The Itinerary:

### Rimini

Archaeological complex of the *domus* of the surgeon of piazza Ferrari/City Museum - Archaeological Section



Complete the visit with the workshops and animated narrations for children:

*Animals Talking about the Museum/The Archaeologist's Shovel.*

The archaeological park, comprising more than 700 square metres dedicated to telling 2000 years of the city's history, was opened to the public in 2007. The architectonic structure enhances the site in regard to the integrity of the remains and a uniform reading of their contexts. The excavation, initiated in 1989 by the Superintendence for the Archaeological Assets of Emilia Romagna, brought to light an ancient Roman *domus*, a palatial, late-antique residence, early-medieval sepulchres and traces of habitations, and late-medieval and modern brickwork.

**The archaeological site of the Domus del chirurgo, the surgeon's house. Rimini.**

Top  
una panoramica.

Centre left  
**mosaic of Orpheus in the taberna medica. Rimini, archaeological site of the Domus del chirurgo.**

Centre right  
**Glass panel from the surgeon's house. Rimini, City Museum.**  
Bottom  
**Chirurgical instruments and**

**remains of containers and vials for medicines. Bronze votive from the surgeon's house. Rimini, City Museum.**

The visit is like a trip to the past that begins in the Roman city, listening to the voices, hearing the sound of the sea lapping against the nearby coast, soaking up aspects of daily life.

Here, not far from the ancient port, a habitation arose from the second century CE that is today called the *domus* "of the surgeon" owing to the profession of its last owner, a doctor of Greek-Eastern cultural origin. Destroyed by a fire in the middle of the third century that developed on the heels of the first barbarian invasions, the *domus* revealed, among the wreckage of the collapse, structures, mosaics, plasterwork and furnishings that offer a "photograph" of life in ancient Rimini.

Mosaics and masonry, in part still covered with colourful frescoes, are expressive of a residence for private and professional use, with a clinic, the *taberna medica*, paved with elegant, polychrome mosaics and featuring a representation of Orpheus in the centre. The collapse that sealed the environment preserved an exceptional surgical-pharmaceutical trove, the richest from antiquity.

That the history of the site did not end with the devastating fire is demonstrated by the remains of an late-antique palatial residence built in the fifth century on top of the front section of the *domus*: the polychrome mosaics featuring elaborate designs and the heating system of some of the spaces testify to the wealth of the residence, the life of which was extinguished in the sixth century CE.

Later the site was destined as a burial area, as documented by a nucleus of tombs; probably in the seventh century, the western zone was involved in a new construction using poor (wood and mud) and re-used materials. The destruction of this final edifice, in the early Middle Ages, probably gave way to an open area.

The Archaeological Section of the nearby City Museum dedicates a special space to the *domus* "of the surgeon": here you can enter the *taberna medica*, reconstructed on a scale close to that of the original, and admire the most important remains discovered among the wreckage from the collapse. The glass panel that decorated the triclinium is astonishing, a rare and precious wall hanging (in Greek called a *pinax*) from the Hellenistic tradition and very similar to an exemplar made in Corinth in the middle of the third century: in the central disk, on the blue of the sea, there are mosaic representations



of a bream, a mackerel and a dolphin inserted in a carved glass plate. Now on display right before our eyes is the exceptional surgical-pharmaceutical trove: among the more than one hundred and fifty bronze tools are groups soldered together by the heat of the blaze. Alongside scalpels, probes, tweezers and orthodontic tongs, there are also a tong for bone surgery, an iron for the removal of bladder stones, a drill with moveable arms, and an orthopaedic lever.

Next are large stone mortar and pestles, useful for the grinding of herbs and minerals when preparing pharmaceuticals. Especially curious is a foot-shaped hollow vessel, a variation on a hot water bottle or ice pack, and no less interesting are the little containers that bear pharmaceutical instructions, written in Greek and Latin!

Also from the *taberna* is the bronze votive hand that is linked to the eastern cult of Jupiter Dolichenus, practised in Rimini between the second and third centuries.

And it is intriguing to note the graffiti on one of the walls in the patient recovery room: perhaps in gratitude a sick person wrote the doctor's name (interpreted as *Eutyches*), defining him as a *homo bonus*.

The facing display case contains a sum of more than eighty coins (the cash change used in everyday life) that spilled to the ground, during the collapse, from the upper floor of the *domus* and also weapons (a spearhead and a javelin) found on the floor of the surgeon's office, remembrances of the violent events that brought about the destruction of the habitation.



## 6. From domus to domus

1 or 2 days



The Itinerary:

### Rimini

Palazzo Massani, Prefecture/City Museum - Archaeological Section



To complement the experience we recommend  
the workshop for children and adults:

*The fresco workshop*

Underground Rimini reveals the ancient city on top of which the centre developed into its current shape. A wealth of information expanded thanks to the excavations conducted after the war, which sketched in an increasingly defined way the urban fabric of *Ariminum*.

Three of the numerous archaeological sites have restored significant testimonies of the *domus* that were transformed into museums on-site: the zone of the palazzo Massani (today the seat of the Prefecture), the zone of the House of Commerce and the complex of Piazza Ferrari (see Itinerary no. 5). Oriented towards the *cardo maximus*, the habitation brought to light **in the**

Top  
**Hercules (detail from the “boat” mosaic) and statuette of a dancing**

**lar (minor goddess) from the palazzo Diotallevi. Rimini, City Museum.**

Bottom left  
**Mosaic of Anubis. Rimini, City Museum.**

Bottom, right  
**Dionysius head fragment. Rimini, City Museum.**

**area around the Palazzo Massani** is an exemplar of the development of the *domus* of *Ariminum*: the excavation has documented at least six interventions, from the modest structures of the middle of the fourth century BCE (and therefore prior to the foundation of the colony!) to its abandonment in the fifth century CE. The remains left to view are from the first century CE when the edifice opened onto a spectacular vista that, from the entrance, embraced the atrium, the *tablinum* (the receiving room with **marble slab flooring**) and the *peristylum* (the porticoed garden ornamented with a **grand basin** the bottom of which is covered in black mosaic).

The **City Museum**, repository of a patrimony that is among the richest of the region, dedicates considerable space to the *domus* and daily life. The undisputed stars of this exploration of ancient Roman lifestyles are the **mosaics**: these restore the horizontal dimension of the decorative furnishings which, along with the wall and ceiling frescoes, welcomed all who entered the room.

And if the resistant **terracotta-cube flooring** was fitting for the simple structures of the first Republican age, the **woven-motif mosaics from via Castelfidardo** - to date the most ancient of *Ariminum* - utilizing prized marble express the representational values adopted for the *domus* of the late second century BCE.

The taste for decoration and polychromy also marked the exterior of prominent houses which were completed, for the protection of wooden roof-elements, with **architectural terracotta**, for the most part produced in local workshops between the second and first centuries CE.

Also expressive of the thriving and precocious Rimini artisan was the **production of oil lamps and ceramic crockery**, for the fire, the kitchen and the table.

The use of costly materials and the spaciousness of the living environments connote the affluence of the *domus* in the early empire. Introduced by ornamental thresholds, the rooms display **black and white mosaic flooring** with single-colour backgrounds - at times embellished with marble fragments - or repetitive floral and geometrical designs.

From the happy Augustan era one finds the **marble-slab pavement** discovered in the **via Dante** in an area historically near the port: precious marbles arranged in a black, white and green cube-pattern. The green tonality recalls the sea that was once overlooked by the edifice.









Top

**Detail from the mosaic “delle Vittorie” from the building complex of palazzo Gioia. Rimini, City Museum.**

Bottom

**Marble table base with relief decorations from the domus at the Mercato Coperto (roofed marketplace). Rimini, City Museum.**

Testimonies to residential building in the first decade of the empire are found in the **land and sea excavations of the Arch of Augustus** (see Itinerary no. 3), **of the Palazzo Massani** (see above) and **of the former Bishop's Palace**. The **pavement of the triclinium of representation** from the former Bishop's Palace, two steps from the theatre and forum, has provided new revelations about living standards in the *domus* of the first century: the dismantling of the marbles in the central part of the pavement - created in the second century BCE in a mixed technique using mosaic and marble - revealed the re-use of lantern supports of ancient yellow marble, a luxury good for the elite of the capital. The well-being of the imperial city is also manifested in the **stores of tableware** and the **statuary** that reveal the artistic culture of the patron and his adherence to court ideology. The *domus* were filled with **copies of classical sculptures**, with **idealized portraits** of members of the imperial family or symbolic images drawn from the propaganda of power such as **the eagle with spread wings and the cornucopia** sculpted into an elegant table support or mythological representations.

Mosaic also accompanies the visitor in the passage of the city to the second and third centuries, introduced by one of the most spectacular exemplars, the **pavement with hunting scenes** discovered in the excavations of the Industrial School.

The decorative **plasterwork** with repetitive motifs (similar to wallpaper) from the excavations of the Palazzo Arpesella evokes the domestic intimacy of the past, as do the objects for daily use in the rooms where the *domina* [lady of the house] passed her time, articulated by the rhythms of spinning and weaving or entrusting herself to the hands of her slaves for the arrangement of her hair and application of cosmetics and perfumes.... The sense of mystery that wafted through the house is reawakened in the furnishings, fittings and appliqués, and in the amulets once believed to keep evil at bay.

Passing through the rooms dedicated to the *taberna medica* and to the excavation of the Piazza Ferrari (see Itinerary no. 5), the visitor “enters” the **domus of Palazzo Diotallevi**, looking out over the *cardo decumanus* formerly fronted by the theatre. This luxurious residence, restructured between the second and third centuries, reserved considerable space for receiving areas, while in a lateral zone it hosted what might have been a private school for **stone pedestals with a master and an apprentice**.

The interior of the residence opened onto elegant rooms paved with **geometric mosaics** and a grand garden courtyard ornamented with a basin furnished with niches. One of these might have held a statue of an athlete, probably a copy of the **discus thrower by Polyclitus**, passed down to us in fragments.

But it was to the grand black and white mosaic with a **scene of ships entering the port** that the *dominus*, presumably a ship-owner, entrusted his own image. The complex and original composition with a representation of **Hercules raising the cup** in the centre suspended guests between admiration and wonder: emotions that we still experience today while looking at the first “photograph” of the port of Rimini.

An affluent lifestyle is also suggested by the **bronze table service** which includes a **dancing household god**, divine protector of the home.

Gods and mythical characters entered daily life as expressions of artistic taste and fashion more than of true devotion, as is the case with the central scene of the **mosaic of the “Jackal-Headed God”**, a manifestation of a widespread passion for the exotic.

The **sculptures of Eros, Dionysus, Priapus and Silenus** lent themselves well to the domestic ambit, expressing convivial pleasures and the propitiatory powers of natures. And if the **statue of Orpheus playing the cithara** could ornament a niche, the group of **bronze statuettes of divinities**, probable discards from a foundry, must have been destined for cult use in a space within the residence dedicated to the household gods.

A different lifestyle is on view in the rooms dedicated to Rimini between the fourth and sixth centuries CE: once again it is **mosaic** that restores the atmosphere of the revival of the *domus* after two centuries of structural inertia. With examples such as valuable and delicately coloured **stone floor decorations**, the mosaics exalt their environments with **complex geometric designs** or noble representations of the *dominus* and his family. Exemplary are the so-called **“Venus at her mirror”** and the **scene of the procession with gifts**, both from the excavation of the Palazzo Gioia, overlooking the current Piazza Cavour. The prestige of these residences was increased by the age of the buildings: one can imagine the admiration elicited by the **“Victory mosaic”**, an expression of the best of second-century mosaic art, which hundreds of years after its making was put on view for guests in the receiving room of the *domus* of the Palazzo Gioia.

Together with **furnishings**, mosaics evoke the affluence of the late-antique residence, but they also show signs of rapid abandonment at the time of the war between the Goths and Byzantines that signalled the passage from the Roman period to the Middle Ages. This is a passage expressed by a cappuccina tomb that mars the harmonious geometry of a late-antique mosaic.

## 7. The Marecchia Valley and the Places of the Sacred

1 or 2 days



The Itinerary:

### **Rimini**

City Museum, Archaeological Section, Roman Epigraphic Museum

### **Verucchio**

Civic Archaeological Museum

### **San Leo**

Parish Church, Cathedral



From prehistoric times, the people populating the territory of Rimini have left traces of their devotion in the places in which the sense of the divine is most intensely felt. Environments where a powerful and flourishing nature manifests itself became legs of an endless journey of faith spanning from the first spontaneous manifestations to the present day: the hilly complex of Covignano, the unmistakable profile of San Marino, the stronghold of Verucchio and the sharp crag of San Leo comprise, in the mid and low valley of Marecchia, the stops sought by the faithful bringing their offerings.





Top left  
**Etruscan terracotta  
figurine form San  
Lorenzo in Monte (?).  
Rimini, City Museum.**

Top right  
**Marble head of a  
female deity from  
Covignano. Rimini,  
City Museum.**

Bottom  
**Stone capitals from  
San Lorenzo in Monte  
(?). Rimini, City  
Museum.**

Covignano, the acropolis of *Ariminum*, is the central thread of the visit to the **City Museum**, among numerous testimonies of ancient religiosity. On the hill, from the fifth century BCE, a nucleus of votive materials was gathered such as the **stipe of the Villa Ruffi**. Discovered in 1890, then dispersed throughout the antiquities market and today documented in the Museum via copies, the “stipe” [a group of votive objects found together at a sacred site] attests to a cult dedicated to a warrior god and to a goddess (the Mother Goddess, the Good Goddess or the Goddess of Fortune?), as well as the custom of purification rituals tied to water. The heterogeneity of the materials sketches a place of encounter between a predominant Umbrian presence and an eloquent Etruscan influence open to contact with Magna Graecia and Greece itself.

If the votive deposit delineates the natural framework typical of places of cult-worship outside of cities in Romagna between the sixth and seventh centuries, then the **terracotta antefix** with a female bust, which decorated the eaves of a roof, would document (if one accepts its provenance from San Lorenzo in Monte) architectural structures built in the fifth century in the wake of the Etruscan encounter.

The cult vocation of Covignano, plentiful with woods and springs, finds confirmation from the first decades of the life of the colony of *Ariminum* in the form of the marble statues of Athena-Minerva and of Fortune (?) from the Villa Ruffi, which some scholars date to the third century. But it was at the beginning of the first century BCE that the religiosity of the hill took on monumental form, as evoked by the temple of the **eight capitals**, which tradition assigns to San Lorenzo in Monte, and the **Greek marble head of a female divinity** (possibly Juno or Demeter, or Feronia or the Egyptian Isis), which was part of an “acrolito” (a large statue made with diverse materials). During the imperial period, the hill became the custodian of the cults of **Hercules** and **Sylvanus**. The devotee turned to the former, expressive of the labours of humankind, in part for the therapeutic quality tied to water. This mythical hero accompanied the history of the city from the fifth century BCE, the epoch which gave form to a now-lost bronze statuette, to the imperial age, for which he was the protagonist of the votive dedication of *Quintus Pullienus Marcus*, testimony to the selection of the hill as a place sacred to him.

Top  
**Interior of the parish church with used capitals from older locations. San Leo.**

Bottom  
**Bas-relief from the Roman period with a banquet scene inserted into the medieval walls. San Leo.**

There are as many as four inscriptions dedicated to Sylvanus, god of the forest and pristine nature; two of which, on view in the Roman Epigraphic Museum, can be traced back to Covignano, perhaps a privileged seat of the cult. Leaving behind the plain, the itinerary returns to the Valmarecchia. The first stop is Verucchio, where, at the **Pian del Monte** [The Flatland of the Mount] and not far from a spring, a natural cave of more than fourteen metres was found, at first used as dumping ground and then, between the sixth and fourth centuries BCE, as a **votive deposit**. The Civic Archaeological Museum (see Itinerary no. 2) has reserved an entire room for the materials found in the 1960s and 70s, dominated by the **large bronze shields** discovered a few metres from the opening of the well. It seems that their ritual deposit can be placed in relation to the consecration of a cult area, around the seventh century. The recovered objects, which include **small bronze and laminate votive sculptures** intentionally broken for the offering, do not resolve the mystery of the identity of the titular deity, but the heterogeneity of the provenances confirms the aggregate value of the sacred places and the openness of Verucchio to contact with the Etruscan and Greek worlds, with the area of the Piceni, and with the contemporary culture of northern Italy.

As with Verucchio, other strongholds were testimony to ancient religiosity: **Torriana**, from which we have an ex-voto dedication, and **Monte Titano** where from the fifth century BCE to the Roman age a therapeutic cult developed, as documented by small bronzes of devotees and by anatomical ex-votos. Pagan devotion was then reinterpreted in the legend of San Marino who, through the miraculous healing of a young paralytic, was ensured perpetual possession of the mountain.

Arriving at Secchiano, which restored, among others, an inscription addressed to Jupiter Optimus Maximus, the itinerary heads towards San Leo approaching the plateau of **Sant'Igne**, where the beauty of the landscape and the profile of the crag, in a rarefied atmosphere, inspire reflection. Here, where there are now a thirteenth-century church and convent dedicated to Saint Francis, the Roman bronze statue of a devotee with a plate for offerings was found, which is now in the San Marino Museum.

**San Leo** rises up, unreachable due to a vertiginous overhang dominated by the Fortress, the fame of which is tied to celebrated sieges and



the Cagliostro prison. Tradition and legend, until now unsupported by historical and archaeological data, intertwine in a story that traces the roots of the fortunes of the site in the Roman and late-antique periods. This is a message expressed in architectural language by the **Parish Church of Santa Maria Assunta** and by the **Cathedral of San Leo**, masterpieces of the Romanesque style, which local memories locate on the ruins of temples to the goddess Fonta, cited in a Roman inscription, and Jupiter Feretrius. This intriguing theory is suggested by the re-use of Roman materials in the medieval structures. Alternating with the pilasters one recognizes **columns** in granite and onion marble topped, and in some cases also sustained, by **Corinthian capitals** from the Imperial age. On the exterior, a sculpture relief featuring a banqueting scene, which must have been part of a funerary monument, testifies to the inheritance from antiquity. Testimonies from the first centuries of Christianity are more rare: in the parish church there is a sixth-century **dosseret** with a sculpted cross, inserted above a Corinthian column; in the cathedral crypt one finds the **cover of a sarcophagus** in which San Leo is said to have been buried. The cover, in the shape of a roof, is dated to the fourth century, while the inscription attributed by tradition to the saint himself dates to at least the fifth century. In the severe Romanesque expressive style, elements from diverse epochs form a harmony born of difference, in a relationship of reciprocal valorisation: the inheritance from antiquity ennobles and offers a solid foundation to the medieval edifices which, in turn, breath new life into the dismembered ruins through the dignity of their structures, thereby expressing the continuity between the classical period and the Middle Ages.

## 8. Natural environment and work of man: Tradition and innovation in the economy between land and sea

2 days



The itinerary:

### Rimini

Archaeological site of the former Agricultural Consortium/  
City Museum - Archaeological section

### Santarcangelo di Romagna

MUSAS



The itinerary can connect with the current realities (wine routes, farm holidays structures, oil mills, fishmonger's...) and connect to the agricultural landscape and woodland (like that of **Valconca** with the plains of San Pietro in Cotto).

Those who desire to immerse themselves in nature could visit the **Museo Naturalistico Multimediale** (Naturalistic Multimedia Museum) and the **Grotte di Onferno** (Onferno Grottos) (for info call: 0541 854060) that shows the geology of the site from the chalky and ravine formations to the characteristics grottos.

The journey into the history of the formation of the territory could



Top  
**Landscape in  
the Conca valley.**

Bottom left  
**Wine amphorae  
with flat base.  
Santarcangelo di  
Romagna, MUSAS.**

Bottom right  
**Fish, molluscs and  
crustaceans from the  
Adriatic sea (detail  
from a mosaic in via  
Cairolli). Rimini, City  
Museum.**

continue in the **Museum of Mondaino** (for info call: 347 6897752), where the documentation on the local palaeontological heritage is collected.

At the MUSAS in Santarcangelo di Romagna:

*The giant Fuocargilla*

Not only the monuments bring Ariminum back to life, but also the consular roads and the wonderful *domus*: the archaeological excavations have also brought to light systems that offer an image of work organization, remains of rustic *villae* and processing facilities for local products.

In Rimini, on the southern ring road, a stone's throw away from Porta Montanara, where, in the place of the former Farmers' consortium, stands a residential complex, it is possible to observe part of a production area unearthed between 2002 and 2003. Here a **great bath** opens up with a baked clay tile floor laid in a herringbone pattern (the classic *opus spicatum*) and walls made waterproof by a layer of *cocciopesto* (lime mortar with crushed pottery): to enter the pool there is a slide that is functional for the use of the structure inserted in a manufacturing context with various rooms (maybe connected to the processing of clay or textile fibres) functioning since the imperial age. An archaeological situation that can be considered as the "gateway" to the handicraft vocation of the territory.

Now, we move along the various itineraries between land and sea, going up and down valleys and hills, where it is not difficult to find our history in the work of the fields, in the handicraft, in the tastes of tradition. In the many venues in the cities on the coast, among the streets of the ancient boroughs and joyful towns, in a succession of varied landscapes, everywhere, when we need to bring warmth to our souls, we find a good glass of Sangiovese wine produced following modern methods respecting the millenary culture evoked by the sources. We know that in Roman times, the local wine, perhaps not of a very high quality, was sold cheap and this favoured its export even to Rome, where it reached the tables of the common people. It is along the wine routes that we discover that Forlimpopoli and Santarcangelo were the main production centres during the middle Imperial Age, and where the selling of the local Romagnolo product was linked to the production of smaller sized and flat bottomed amphorae, suitable





for transportation on land. The **Historical Archaeological Museum of Santarcangelo (MUSAS)**, located in Palazzo Cenci shows the farming inclination of an area, where the ceramic and brick industry have transformed the medieval artistic tradition and modern industry.

And, while the kilns within the Museum display the procedures of clay manufacturing, the documentation about the rustic *villae* instead opens a window on the local economy based on the cultivation of grapevines, grains, vegetables and olive trees.

The olive oil from our hills, even today brings out the flavour of food, which is the result of skilful work enhancing the excellence of the products. You can smell everywhere the aroma of the *piada*, a simple *focaccia* in which the addition of lard or olive oil gives it a soft texture. It is baked on the typical fireclay terracotta griddle, a reminiscence of the *testum* already used by the Romans, and the *piada* combines well with herbs or accompanies quality salami and cheeses from Romagna.

Among these, the soft cheeses such as squacquerone and raviggiolo, but also the fine fossa cheese produced in Talamello and Sogliano al Rubicone and in Sant'Agata Feltria and Mondaino. These products are typical of the valleys between Romagna, Tuscany and the Marche and represent a homage to the agricultural and pastoral economy and cheese making, a deeply rooted tradition even during the prehistoric era. Sheep breeding has in fact always represented one of the main resources of the territory, renowned even during the classical period. How can we not remember the D.O.C. cheese from Sarsina, of Plinian memory from which the *caciotta* of Romagna originates?

The woody environment and abundant cereal cultivations, present since the Roman republican period following the Gallic tradition, encouraged **pig farming** that has become today a real "industry" with the prosciutto or cured ham from Montefeltro and represents a quality product par excellence.

**Wild herbs and tender vegetables** that come from the fields and vegetable gardens such as asparagus, were also well appreciated by the Romans. Town festivals are increasing to celebrate the local products such as honey (celebrated at Montebello di Torriana) or chestnuts that were the poor man's food in the past but now dominate the warm autumn festive atmosphere.

The territory of Rimini, is linked to the inland while facing the sea at the same time: it is renowned for its abundance of fish since antiquity; the Adriatic offers tasty fish varieties which make up convivial grills, fresh seafood salads, savoury fish soups etc...

In modern Rimini, in a society where industry, together with the service sector, redefines the relation between man and environment, it is surprising to find that in a common context of the market continues to coexist with agricultural, pastoral and maritime economies.

Pursuing images of land and sea are partly represented in the iconography of the *Ariminum*: wild animals, grape clusters, olive branches together with darting fish can be glimpsed on the small tiles of the tympanum in the Augustan arch as well as the large Fortuna and other findings.

In the archaeological section of the **Museum of the City of Rimini**, the room dedicated to the sea preserves splendid mosaics in which craftsmen depicted scenes of fish, molluscs and shellfish of the Adriatic. The sea as a small blue line on the horizon, accompanies our journey now among the archaeological exemplars and later in a landscape which has as its protagonist the long golden beach that finally reaches the rugged promontory of Gabicce.



## 9. The natural environment and the work of man: tradition and present economy of the high Valmarecchia

1 day



The itinerary:

**Perticara**

Sulphur

**Casteldelci**

House-Museum



Going up the river Marecchia along the towns of the **Montefeltro**, which have recently become part of the Province of Rimini, offers the impression of travelling in time. In a landscape stirred by hills, on which rocky spurs rise like that of San Leo, dominating the valley in a view that comprises green pastures and thick forests, in sceneries and paths that our ancestors have tramped on during the seasonal movements which were linked to sheep farming and exploitation of forest resources. Activities which still characterize today the internal areas of the Valmarecchia, where the wild surroundings preserve the conditions for sheep breeding, hunting (mainly wild boar), and the gathering of forest products.

If the route, interspersed with towers and castles to protect a land



Top  
**Inside the Historical  
Mining Museum.  
Perticara.**

Bottom  
**Archaeological finds in  
the private museum  
S. Colarieti di  
Casteldelci.**

contended since late antiquity, reminds us of the medieval period and the historical struggle between the Montefeltro and Malatesta, signs rooted in Prehistory and the Roman age also emerge. And the relationship between man and nature is sanctioned also by the wood divinities (from Silvano to Diana, particularly worshipped in Romagna), and asserts an **economy** based on forestry and sheep farming, also joined by the stone and maybe sulphur quarries to answer the coastal needs.

It is an economy rooted in time, which is capable of continuing the traditions and flavours, preserving also pristine panoramas.

The territorial resources are today represented by gastronomic excellencies such as the truffles from Sant'Agata Feltria, tasty pecorino cheeses, bread baked in the ovens of Maiolo, first choice meat, forest fruits, and excellent honey. These products are appreciated in the food festivals that enliven the valley villages, keepers of knowledge and work of the men who populated these "border" lands. A cultural and environmental heritage that finds its reference point in the Mountain Community of the High Valmarecchia and reflects different identities, besides the landscape of the architectural statements in the network of museums merged in the System of the Province of Rimini. A mosaic of realities that depict the most authentic features of this territory.

Thus, in the municipality of Montefeltria we encounter the mineral centre of Perticara, known since Roman antiquity to support the agricultural economy with that of sulphur extraction. The local **Historical Mineral Museum**, the **Sulphur** with the aim to testify the extraction activities which ended in 1964, has assigned an interesting museum route that describes a story interwoven by sacrifice, fatigue and danger. An important example of industrial archaeology, the Museum becomes a reference point for those who desire to "explore" the mining experience, a cross-section of geological, industrial, economic facts that are the background of many human events. Who goes up the valley, and wants to push as far as **Casteldelci**, among the territories of Tuscany and Romagna, will remain astounded by the beauty of the suspended landscape of the hamlet that gave birth to Ugucione della Faggiola, a mercenary leader mentioned by Dante. The silence, interrupted by the flowing of the torrent Senatello, an tributary stream of the river Marecchia and some rare sounds, represent the setting

of the architectural stone featured village, a testimony of its past medieval glory. Keeper of the place's memory is the **House-Museum S. Colarieti**: here is the

archaeological evidence that tells the story of this land not far from the sources of the Marecchia and Tiber rivers, a mountain ridge that in Roman times has seen the flourishing of *municipia* such as *Sassina* (in the Savio valley) and *Sestinum* (in the Foglia valley).

The findings confirm the inhabitation of a mountainous territory already in the Prehistoric period: since the Palaeolithic man has left traces of his presence in the chipped stones and arrow points, that are signs of hunting activity. To prove the existence of rural settlements dating back to the Imperial age are the tombs found in the locations of Pescaia and Calanco in which pottery and oil lamps with the producer's brand have been unearthed. Together with the funerary materials, also findings of the Republican period and the first years of the Empire have been discovered: table and kitchen ceramics, terracotta floor tiles, bronze objects, oil lamps, loom weights and coins. Very interesting is the print of a studded sandal on a tile before baking; significant is also the evidence of the *glirarium*, a terracotta container in which the dormouses were fattened, a delicacy from the times of Apicio. A discovery that also finds confirmation in other locations in the territory and nearby Sestino, to testify the widespread use of raising domestic animals during Roman times.

These are fragments of everyday life, in the daily experiences of the small inhabited areas of the high valley (besides Casteldelci, Ponte Messa, Pennabilli, Maciano) and were most prosperous and active during the first Imperial period.

Archaeology and nature outline the most ancient features of Montefeltro, a heritage that combines tradition, art and creativity giving life to magical places that are full of charm: like in Talamello, where the Museum-Picture Gallery meets the artistic works of Fernando Gualtieri; and in Sant'Agata Feltria where the rural culture is renewed in the local handicraft and is a place that is a symbol of medieval history open to contemporary expressive forms; at Pennabilli, where history meets the poetry and genius of Tonino Guerra.

**Museums and archaeological sites in the Province of Rimini  
visited during the itineraries described in this booklet.**

**Casteldelci, Casa Museo Sandro Colarieti  
e Museo archeologico Uguccione della Faggiola  
(House Museum and archaeological museum)**

Via Roma, 16/A - 47861 Casteldelci

Info: 0541 915423

e-mail: ufficio.turistico.casteldelci@gmail.com

**Cattolica, Museo della Regina (The Queen's Museum)**

Via Pascoli, 23 - 47841 Cattolica

Info: 0541 966577

e-mail: museo@cattolica.net

[www.cattolica.net/retecivica-citta-di-cattolica/servizi-del-comune/museo-e-gallerie](http://www.cattolica.net/retecivica-citta-di-cattolica/servizi-del-comune/museo-e-gallerie)

**Cattolica, Area archeologica  
dell'ex-piazza del Mercato Ortofrutticolo  
(Archaeological site, former vegetable and fruit market)**

Piazzetta mercato - 47841 Cattolica

Info: 0541 966577 Museo della Regina

The site is open and visible from outside.

Advanced booking required for visits

**Perticara, Sulphur Museo Storico Minerario  
(Historical Mining Museum)**

Via Montecchio, 20 - Cantiere Certino - 47863 Perticara

Info: 0541 927576 - 339 6315683

e-mail: info@museosulphur.it

[www.museosulphur.it](http://www.museosulphur.it)

**Riccione, Museo del Territorio (Regional Museum)**

Centro Culturale della Pesa

Via Lazio 10 - 47838 Riccione

Info: 0541 600113

e-mail: museo@comune.riccione.rn.it

[www.comune.riccione.rn.it/museodelterritorio](http://www.comune.riccione.rn.it/museodelterritorio)



**Riccione, Sito archeologico di San Lorenzo in Strada  
(Archaeological site of San Lorenzo in Strada)**

Via Flaminia, 25 - 47838 Riccione

Info: 0541 600113 Museo del Territorio

The site is located inside the building of the communal pharmacy no. 2 and always open.

Advance booking required for guided tours.

**Rimini, Museo della Città  
e sito archeologico di piazza Ferrari (*domus* del chirurgo)  
(City Museum and archaeological site on Ferrari square and  
the surgeon's house)**

Via L.Tonini, 1 e piazza Ferrari - 47921 Rimini

Info: 0541 21482-704421-704426

e-mail: musei@comune.rimini.it

www.museicomunalirimini.it

**Rimini, sito archeologico di Palazzo Massani (*domus praefecti*)  
(Archaeological site of Palazzo Massani, the prefects' houses)**

Via IV Novembre, 40 - 47921 Rimini

Info: 0541 704421-704426 Musei Comunalì

Advance booking required for visits.

**Rimini, area archeologica dell'ex Consorzio Agrario  
(Archaeological site on former agricultural cooperative society)**

Via Circonvallazione Meridionale - 47923 Rimini

The site is always open.

**Santarcangelo, MUSAS-Museo Storico Archeologico  
(Archaeological and Historical Museum)**

Via della Costa, 26 - 47822 Santarcangelo di Romagna

Info: 0541 624703

e-mail: info@museisantarcangelo.it

www.museisantarcangelo.it/musas

**Verucchio, Museo Civico Archeologico  
(City Archaeological Museum)**

Via S. Agostino - 47826 Verucchio

Info: 0541 670222

e-mail: museoarcheologicoverucchio@gmail.com