**Leisure tourism**

**Trekking to discover San Marino and Valmarecchia**

**Duration: 3 days**

**Day 1: San Marino (Trekking about 7 km)**

Welcome to the ancient land of the free! You will reach the historic center along "La Rupe del Monte Titano", one of the eight paths that are part of the "Cammino del Titano", {4 km of route, difference in height 263 metres, difficulty medium- difficult, walking time approximately 2h} which connects Borgo Maggiore with the historic center of San Marino. The path offers breathtaking views of the Adriatic coast and is completely immersed in the nature of Monte Titano declared a World Heritage Site in 2008, together with the historic center of San Marino. Thus you reach the 3 symbols of the Republic which in order along the path are the Third Tower or Montale, then the Second Tower or Cesta and along the Passo delle Streghe, a stone bridge carved on the crest of the cliff, the First Tower or Guaita. Going down, passing through the well-kept Orti Borghesi, you reach the Basilica del Santo (or Pieve), where the remains of Saint Marino, founder of this small republic, are kept, and then the Palazzo Pubblico of San Marino or Government Palace, seat of the main institutional and administrative bodies of the Republic. Continuing we descend towards the Cava dei Balestrieri, passing in front of the State Museum where there are archaeological finds and artistic testimonies linked to the history of San Marino, to reach the Porta di San Francesco or Porta del Paese, the actual access point of the historic center . From here we continue towards the Porta della Rupe, the ancient access to the city walls, and descend along the Costa dell'Arnella to then find ourselves at the starting point. From here it is worth a walk to the Sacello del Santo, the place where it all began, in fact it is right here that Marino took refuge and gave life to the first community of the Republic. In 257 BC. the Roman emperor Diocletian ordered the reconstruction of the city of Ariminum and for this purpose he called craftsmen from different parts of the empire; according to legend, it was thus that two expert stonemasons named Marino and Leone, coming from Dalmatia, arrived in Rimini and were sent to Titano, where they lived for 3 years, to extract the stone necessary for the reconstruction. Subsequently, to escape Christian persecution, Leone took refuge on Monte Feltro, founding San Leo, while Marino on Monte Titano, in the place we now call the Sacello del Santo.

**Curiosity**

- The "Peregrine Falcon" has returned to San Marino since the 1990s, which today has two families in the area and, for some years now, the wolf has returned.

- To the right of the Pieve is the “Church of San Pietro”. Inside there are two beds carved into the rock where, according to tradition, Marino and Leo rested. According to legend, Marino and Leo dug these beds and anyone who lays down is cured of rheumatic diseases.

- Inside the Palazzo Pubblico is the half-bust of Abraham Lincoln. San Marino conferred honorary citizenship of San Marino on the president who abolished slavery. In his letter of gratitude to the Captains Regent Lincoln uses the words "Great and good friends" and continues by writing "Although your domain is small, nevertheless your state is one of the most honored in all of history". These words are still very dear to the people of San Marino today.

- In 1897 in San Marino the fossil of a fin whale called TITANOCETUS SAMMARINENSIS was found, unique in its kind and lived about 15 million years ago in the San Marino territory when it was bathed by the Adriatic Sea.

- According to legend, Marino and Leo threw the tools of the trade from one mountain to another.

**2nd day: San Leo and Valmarecchia (Trekking about 16 km)**

On this day we will cover the Ponte Maria Maddalena - San Leo ring {about 16 km of route, difference in altitude 670 meters, medium-easy difficulty, walking time about 5 hours. Signpost: CAI 017/A - CAI95 - CAI 017}. It is a beautiful route that starts from Ponte Maria Maddalena and with which, passing through Monte Fotogno and Tausano, you reach San Leo admiring the landscapes that inspired great artists. San Leo, defined by Umberto Eco as "the most beautiful city in Italy" stands on an imposing rock with overhanging walls. Inside the historic center of San Leo it is possible to admire the Cathedral dedicated to San Leone (founder and patron), the Torre Civica and the Pieve which, according to legend, was built by the stonemason Leone and is the oldest monument of both San Leo is from all of Montefeltro; inside, on the floor below the nave are the crypt and the sacellum of San Leone. From every point of the historic center it is possible to admire the Fortezza, a natural fort defined as "an admirable meeting point between art and nature", and which due to its position has long been disputed throughout history before being transformed into a prison, hosting famous characters such as Felice Orsini and Cagliostro. Continuing along the naturalistic path, we arrive at the Convent of Sant'Igne, (from the Latin Ignis = fire, light) founded by San Francesco d'Assisi, who according to legend was lost in the woods and only thanks to a luminous apparition, perhaps a fire, he managed to find his way. Inside is kept a segment of the trunk of the elm under which Francis preached in San Leo. The Olmo di San Francesco was demolished in 1662 and once stood in the historic center where the classic fountain is today. Continuing the path from Sant'Igne you return to the starting point.

**Curiosity**

- From two panoramic points of San Leo it is possible to admire the landscapes painted by the Renaissance painter Piero della Francesca in his two famous works "Portrait of Battista Sforza" and "Devoted San Gerolamo".

- San Leo was mentioned by Dante in a song of the Purgatory of the Divine Comedy.

- The Fortress of San Leo was the capital of the Italian Kingdom of Berengario II.

**3rd day: Verucchio bridge - Montebello - Torriana (Trekking about 16 km)**

On this day we will walk the Ponte Verucchio - Montebello - Torriana route {about 16 km of route, difference in height 393 metres, medium-high difficulty, walking time around 5 hours. Signpost: CAI 03-03A}. It is a path of naturalistic and historical interest that offers spectacular panoramic views. The naturalistic and environmental importance of Torriana and Montebello is confirmed by the fact that this area has been recognized as a SCI (Site of Community Importance) and a Wildlife Protection Oasis has also been established in this area. Starting from the Ponte Verucchio car park, you approach the Marecchia river from which the entire valley takes its name, to continue up to Saiano. The complex of Saiano, made up of the church, the rectory and the tower, is certainly worth a visit. The Sanctuary, restored in 1996, has always been a destination for pilgrimages and a place of prayer. The population of Valmarecchia is very fond of the Sanctuary which is remembered for the graces received linked to drought and motherhood. The cylindrical tower was used for a long time as a lookout and guard point, in fact it allows a visual triangulation between Verucchio, Saiano, Montebello and San Leo. From Saiano, continuing in the direction of Fontebuona, you reach Montebello, which dominates the Marecchia and Uso valleys, to discover its history and stories between reality and mystery. There is an old legend linked to the fortress that tells of a ghost of a 5-year-old girl named Guendalina, daughter of the feudal lord, who disappeared in the basement of the castle to chase her ball. It is June 21, 1375. No one was ever able to find the girl or her ball. The girl was called Guendalina and she was an albino; for fear of people's prejudices, her parents decided to dye her hair, but the dye didn't work and the girl's hair turned blue, hence the nickname "Azzurrina".

The path continues passing through Gessi and reaching Torriana. Unlike Montebello, today the town of Torriana does not coincide with the medieval castle located higher up. In the town it is possible to admire "The tree of water" by the poet and screenwriter Tonino Guerra. The castle of Torriana also called Castello Scorticata had a great strategic value due to its natural position and served as a fortress which, together with that of Verucchio, prevented the passage in the valley. Above the Rocca it is possible to reach the tower, from which you can enjoy an exceptional 360-degree panorama of the places on both sides of the Marecchia river. From here continue towards Mount Borgelino which deserves a stop for the panoramic view and then take the road towards the valley floor and return to the starting point.

**Curiosity**

- Legend has it that when the Madonna of Saiano was transferred to Montebello, by miracle it was found several times in Saiano.

- It is said that Azzurrina is still in the castle! It is said that, every five years, at the end of the summer solstice, a sound is heard coming from the castle's basement.

- In the area of Torriana and Montebello there are abundant orchids including “Ophris speculum,” a rare plant in Italy with the exception of Sicily and Sardinia.

- According to legend, in 1304 in the dungeons of the Rocca di Torriana Giaciotto Malatesta was killed, the one who had killed his wife Francesca da Rimini and his brother Paolo, the lovers remembered by Dante in the Divine Comedy.