

# Tourist routes

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# GROTTAMMARE

*Ascoli Piceno • Marche • Italy*



## *Riviera picena delle Palme*

ENGLISH





*“The six weeks in Grottammare will remain one of the best and more sweet memories if mine...”*

Franz Liszt

Grottammare, lauded in the fifteenth century by the humanist Flavio Biondo for the beauty of its landscape and the surrounding nature, was already a renowned health resort and spa at the beginning of the nineteenth century. It was chosen as a holiday residence by nobles and famous personalities; even the musician Franz Liszt spent a short period here in the summer of 1868. The transformation of Grottammare into a refined seaside location favoured the construction of elegant villas in the Liberty style surrounded by splendid gardens at the beginning of the 1900's.



Despite the time that has passed, Grottammare still offers today the possibility of purifying oneself from the smog of the city, to rediscover forgotten colours and perfumes, and the possibility to appreciate once more the serenity of the passing hours in complete harmony with nature. The clean water, the fine sand of the coast, the enchanting old part of the town which clings to the hill and the thriving vegetation, together with the carefully planned urban works and the functionality and quality of the services, have for several years guaranteed prestigious international awards such as the European Blue Flag, the Four Sails of the Touring Club, the Green Spike for rural and sustainable development, the Flag for cycling municipalities and the latest Lila Flag.

The three itineraries, among the many possibilities, which are proposed, allow one to discover secret viewpoints and luminous belvederes and to follow the traces left by important characters of Grottammare and to appreciate the historical wealth which is protected by the ancient stones.

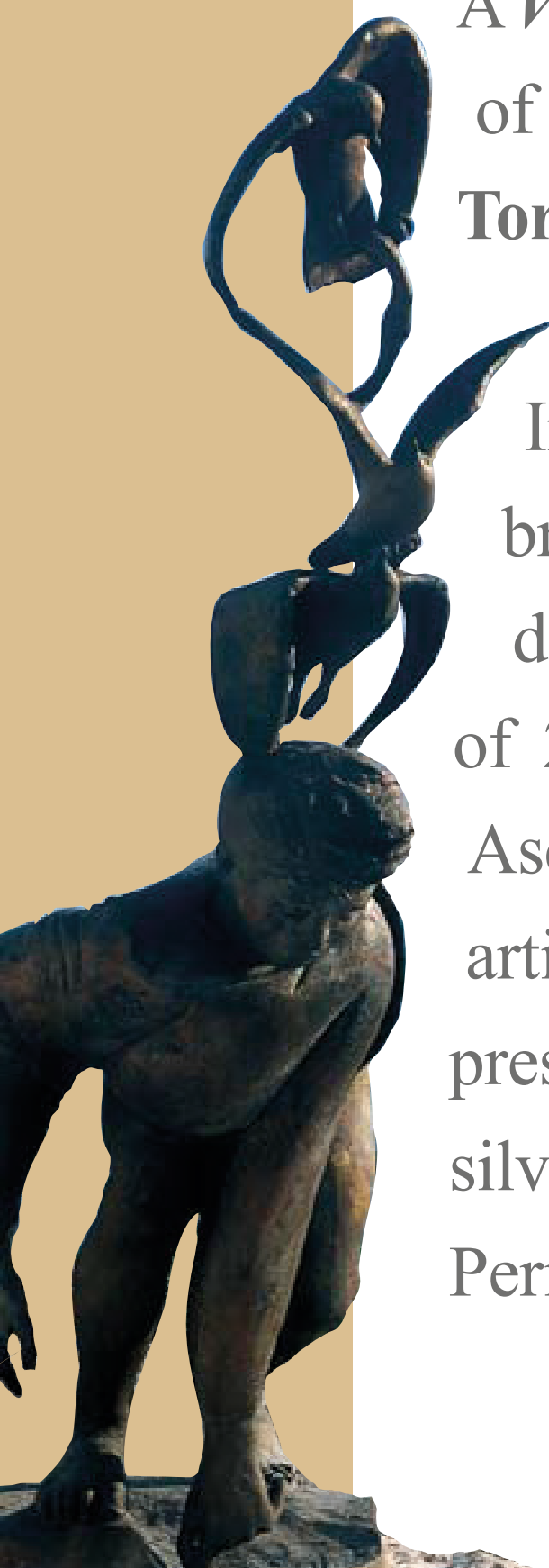
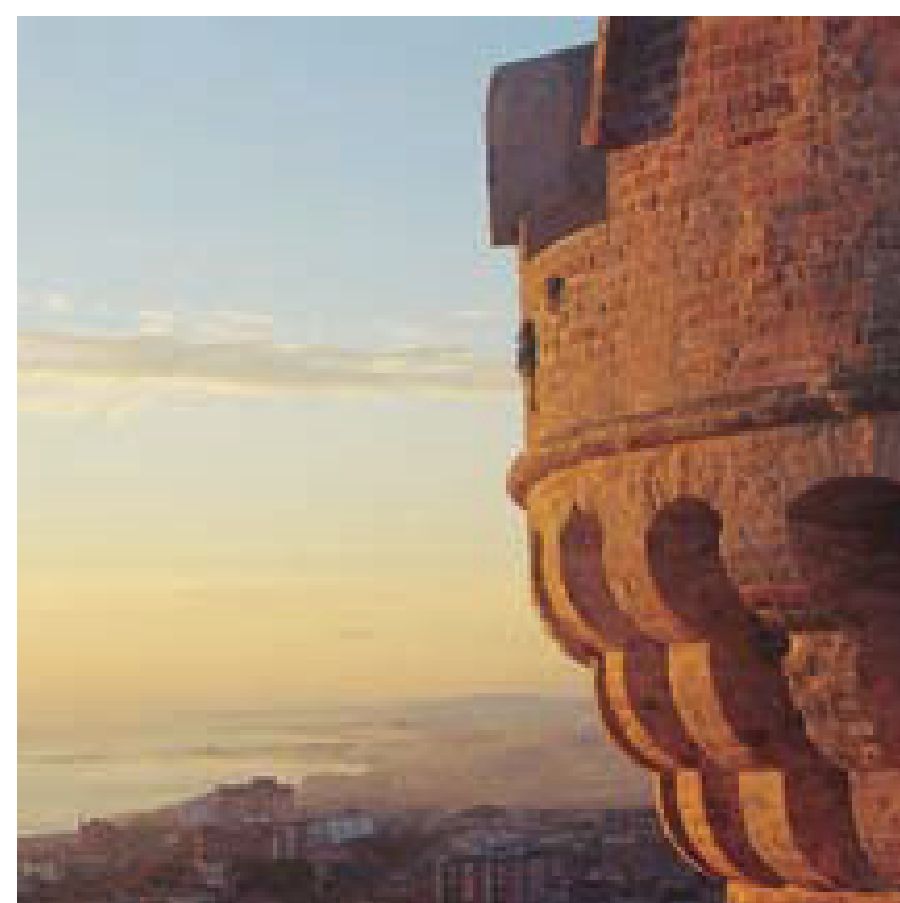
Grottammare is, therefore, a modern and comfortable city that has been able to jealously conserve its own nature, history and tradition.



# FAZZINI ITINERARY

**O**n the 4th May 1913 the famous sculptor Pericle Fazzini, author of the Resurrection which is exposed in the Sala Nervi in the Vatican, was born. The Fazzini itinerary allows one to draw nearer to the intense career of the artist, marked by numerous exhibits in some of the most famed museums in the world. Some significant halting places are found along an itinerary that winds itself from the beach to the old town. At the beginning of the bicycle path, which leads from Grottammare to Cupramarittima, a bronze sculpture is to be found: the *Ragazzo con i gabbiani*, obtained from the original in wood 1940-1944, and probably the most realized sculpture of the artist. In Piazza Dante, in the main street of the town, there is a stele which reproduces a bronze medal. It was executed by Fazzini for the Comitato Dantesco, on the occasion of the official celebrations held for the **700th anniversary of Dante's birth**. The original is kept in the Torrione della Battaglia museum. In the main square of the town stands the scale model of the monument to Kennedy entitled *Metamorfosi*, 1965, which was donated by the artist to Grottammare; a stele which breaks open vertically to reveal the profile of the American president. In the park of the Madonna it is possible to admire the *Ritratto di Mario Rivosecchi*, the poet friend who discovered the talent of the young sculptor and who introduced him to the Roman circle of artists. A *Via Crucis* in bronze is conserved in the church of Sant'Agostino. The heart of the Fazzini itinerary is the museum **Torrione della Battaglia**, a fortification which dates back to the sixteenth century and which was restored in 2004.

In the exhibition room there is a collection of scale models in bronze, designs, lithographs, notebooks and other precious objects donated by Pericle Fazzini to the model Lisa Schneider: a collection of 250 pieces purchased by the Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Ascoli Piceno, which documents the complex laboratory and the articulated inspiration of the "wind sculptor". Among the most prestigious works of the collection we remember the scale model in silver of the famous Resurrezione, the splendid legacy of the artist. Pericle Fazzini died in Rome in December 1987.





The beginning of the Liberty style began to spread in The Marches at the beginning of the 1900's. Grottammare, along with other towns along the Adriatic coast, found itself in a particular position with respect to the large centres of Italy and Europe which saw the blossoming and development of this style. The most consistent nucleus of these villas is along Viale Colombo, ex Viale Marino, realized in 1890. The Viale, which is dotted for all its length with exuberant palms, has a pavement in porphyry and white marble from Carrara, and is laid with designs which have been recuperated from the decorative tradition of the 1920's. Along the Viale Colombo we find the villa "Marucchi", the smaller villas such as "Alessandrini", "Ida" and "Ornella" and the **villa Matricardi-Cola**, the most worthy example of Liberty architecture in Grottammare, designed in 1913 by the architect Cesare Bazzani, following the orders of the engineer Giuseppe Maria Matricardi, a builder from Ascoli and owner of a factory of majolica (it is not a coincidence that the decorations on the villa are icons which testify to the ceramics produced by the owner). Continuing south one arrives at the building known as **Kursaal** that presides over the newly renovated piazza. The actual building was inaugurated in the July of 1952 and for many years was a renowned nightclub and one of the most exclusive clubs along the Adriatic Riviera. Since 2003 it has been housing on the ground floor the Museum of contemporary Illustration MIC, which preserves and exhibits illustrations by the most important Italian art masters, dedicated to leading figures of humor and show business. Walking along the Lungomare della Repubblica we can admire the simple and elegant lines of the villas "De Nardis- Palombari", "Monti", "Pontremoli-Modigliani" and "Flaiani". Valid examples of Liberty architecture and decorations exist not only along the coast but also in the centre of the town. Let us remember the villa "Ricci" in Viale Garibaldi and the imposing elementary school "G. Speranza" that reminds us of the Liberty forms due to its large cornices and the decorations in the lunettes of the windows.





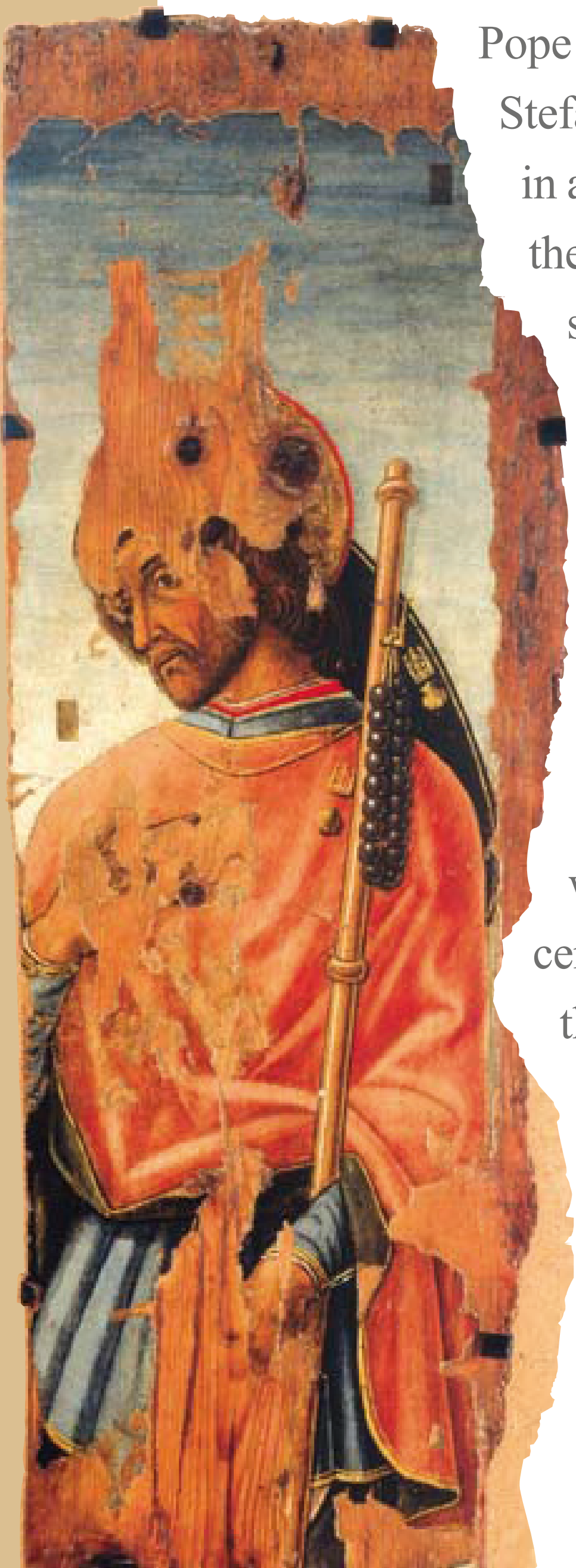
Grottammare has given determined characters and strong temperaments to the men born here, as in the case of Felice Peretti and Pope Sisto V (1521-1590), to whom the Sisto Itinerary is dedicated. Walking along the streets of fifteenth century Grottammare it is possible to visit the **church of Saint Lucia**, built following the orders of the Pope in proximity to his family home and birthplace. It holds a splendid organ of a refined baroque structure built in 1752 by the renowned organ maker Francesco Fedeli della Rocchetta di Camerino, and now beautifully restored. Furthermore, Sisto V left many objects to Grottammare in his will which show his affect for his home town and which are conserved in the **Museo Sistino** in the **church of San Giovanni Battista**. Inside the church valuable objects such as the chalice with **paten** and the **medal** with the effigy of Camilla Peretti, his sister, can be found.

There are also precious paintings by artists from The Marches such as Vittore Crivelli and Vincenzo Pagani. Since 1794 a statue of

Pope Sisto V by the Swiss artist Stefano Interlenghi has stood in a niche on the front wall of the **Teatro dell'Arancio**, a seventeenth century building

which was renovated in 2003 and which hosts theatrical shows, small concerts and a permanent exhibition of the works of the artist Gianni Ottaviani. Finally an effigy in bronze of Pope Sisto V by the sculptor Aldo Sergiacomi, built in 1984, stands casting a severe eye over the recently renovated **piazza of San Pio V**. The itinerary ends

with a visit to the eighteenth century **church of San Pio V** that conserves works by Luigi Fontana, Cleto Capponi, Ubaldo Ferretti and Vittorio Fazzini, the father of Pericle Fazzini.







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[www.comune.grottammare.ap.it](http://www.comune.grottammare.ap.it)

[cultura@comune.grottammare.ap.it](mailto:cultura@comune.grottammare.ap.it)

