



GINOSA AND ITS HISTORY

Ginosa is located in the hinterland of the Taranto province, Apulia (Italy) and is only 25 km from Matera.



It is located inside the Park of the ravines, a natural area that has become a Site of Community Importance (S.I.C.) in Apulia, considering its peculiar morphology. Ginosa's urban centre is set in the *ravine*, a karst

incision of erosive origin, like the American Canyons (but smaller) with deep bights and steep walls of tufa rock.

There are several opinions on the etymology of the name *Ginosa* and three different hypotheses have been developed:

1. Ginosa, originally *Genusia*, is believed to be founded by the inhabitants of *Genusium*, today known as Knossos on the island of Crete:



2. Another widespread hypothesis on the meaning of the name seems to be linked to the word *Genusium* (from *genus*), meaning “generator of peoples”.
3. However, the most accredited hypothesis would see the origins of Ginosa as *Genusia*, because the local populations were devoted to the cult of the god Janus. Janus (from *Latin*) is the god of the beginnings. He's one of the oldest and

most important gods of the Roman, Latin and Italian religion.



He is usually portrayed with two faces, because gods can look at the future and the past, but also because he's the god of the door, and he can look both inside and outside.

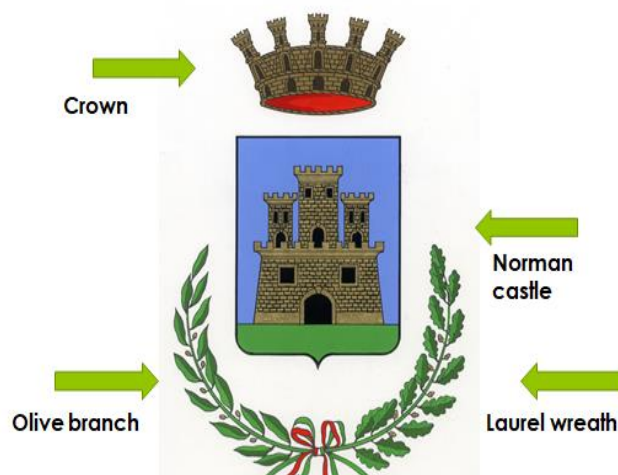
The history of *Genusia* dates back to the Paleolithic era, nearly 2.5 million years ago. In the “Riparo dell'Oscurusciuto”, an important archaeological site was discovered. Here, in 1998, the University of Siena identified the remains of a Neanderthal man. There are numerous rock-caved churches, rich in frescoes and made of tufa rock: for their historical and cultural importance they have been included in the “Cultural Routes of the Apulian Middle Age” project by MIBACT Ministry. The most representative monument is the Norman Castle: it appears in the heraldic coat of arms of the Municipality of Ginosa. It was built in 1080 by Roberto il

Guiscardo to protect the territory from Saracenic invasions.

GINOSA'S COAT OF ARMS

Ginosa's coat of arms is composed of three different symbols:

CITTA' DI GINOSA



Crown: a symbol of royalty.

Norman castle: one of the most majestic building in Ginosa, dating back to 1080.

Olive branch: a symbol of peace.

Laurel wreath: a symbol of prestige and of the Italian country.

THE MOTHER CHURCH

The Mother Church was built between 1496 and 1515. It was initially named after Saint Martin of Tours, but nowadays its name is the Lady of the Holy Rosary.



From an architectural point of view, we can find the following elements:

- a gabled façade;
- a slender bell tower;
- a rose window;
- cruciform pillars;
- pointed arches.

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**Progetto:
DISCOVERING GINOSA**

**Brochure:
Ginosa and its history**

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GINOSA AND THE RAVINE

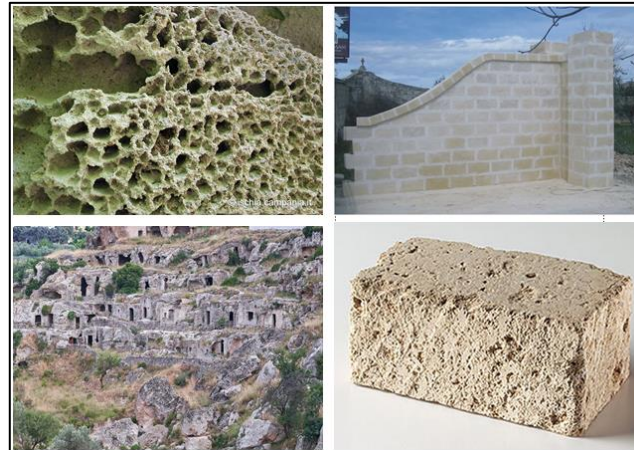
The ravine of Ginosa is a small canyon which has been originated as a result of the meteoric waters that have carved out the route over the millennia. In a horseshoe shape, the ravine surrounds the whole area, extending for over 10 km. This area is now called “Park of the ravines”, a natural area that has become a Site of Community Importance (S.I.C.) in Apulia, considering its peculiar morphology.



The ravine

Technically speaking, a ravine is a *karst incision* of erosive origin, like the American Canyons (but smaller) with *deep bights* and *steep walls* of *tufa rock*. Let's analyse the keywords:

- a karst incision is an incision that has been made by the water;
- deep bights indicate curves in a watercourse;
- steep walls are very inclined rocks, like cliffs;
- tufa rock is a crumbly and porous rock.



Tufa rocks

The ravine of Ginosa can be divided into two different areas: *Rivolta Village* and *Casale District*. They are not just constructive techniques used in the ravine, but they represent a real urban planning and management of land resources. For example, these villages were built with the entrances

facing south, to allow the sun to heat the rooms in winter.

Another feature of these caves villages was the ability to collect water. In fact, more than one cave had a cistern dug into the rock where rainwater was channeled through a system of small channels. In 1500 the strong demographic increase determined the development of a housing structure called “cave house”, half excavated and the other half built in masonry.

Rivolta Village

Rivolta Village is a troglodyte village. It consists in 66 home caves, arranged on 5 floors connected by steps. Each house had a characteristic chimney coming out from the roof which represented a symbol of the family. Men used to live with animals and families were very numerous. Shelves, cisterns, underground oil mills and animal shelters are still visible. This village is still considered by scholars as one of the most important rock villages in Italy.



Rivolta Village

Casale District

Going down the stream you will reach the rock village, *il Casale*. The cave dwellings have two rooms with a single access, a fireplace in the entrance room and the barn at the back. This area suffered from a flood and an earthquake in 1857 and another flood in 2013.



Casale district

GINOSA'S ROCK-CAVED CHURCHES

Walking along the Tratturo Comunale delle Murge, facing the Rivolta, there were three rock-caved churches: Santa Barbara, Santa Sofia, Santa Sofia II, probably excavated in 600 on the remains of the original Church of Santa Sofia. Most of them were destroyed by the 2013 flood. Only the Church of Santa Sofia can be still reached.



The Church of Santa Sofia

In the Casale District the rock-caved church of Santa Domenica is of great importance and on the highest peak there is the Church of Santi Medici, where an Ecce Homo is painted inside.

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MASSERIE IN GINOSA

Definition and history

Masseria is one of those words that cannot be easily translated in English: it's not a farm, it's not a hotel, it's something unique. A *masseria* is a big rural building, often fortified, reflecting a social and economic organization connected to land property. In other words, a *masseria* is a fortified farmhouse or country house on a country estate usually found in the Italian region of Puglia. A *masseria* is similar to a *hacienda* in Spain or a plantation in the United States. The *masseria* was like a rather large farm complex, where the land barons stored their food and possessions from the 16th to 18th centuries in Italy.



Masseria Strada, Ginosa

A typical *masseria* often included: the landowners' home, the farmers' home, stables, storage and a chapel. Some of them were built around the old watchtower of the 16th century, located in strategic positions to control the territory.

The *masserie* were once the heart of vast land estates, surrounded by rolling fields, groves and pasturelands, inhabited in the summer months by the landowners and the peasant farm workers who tended to crops and the farm animals. The complex usually included several other specialty buildings to house animals, to store crops, or to make wine or cheese. Some *masseria* developed into essentially small villages surrounded and protected high walls with a central courtyard surrounded by all the other structures. The *masserie* were fortified to protect against attacks by Turks or pirates. The word *masseria* comes from the Italian word *masserizie*, which means household furnishings, food stores or belongings.

Architecture

The architecture of the *masserie* are simultaneously austere and luxurious. The simple yet spacious rooms retain their original

charm, including stone kitchen fireplaces, churchlike arched hallways, and restored marble floors. The rustic reds, golden yellows, and cornflower blues of classic Italy pop when set against the stark white backdrops of medieval stucco and stone.



Masseria Strada, one of the rooms

Masserie today

For tourists wanting to break away from usual accommodations while on vacation, bed and breakfasts and country inns are a natural go-to. Many *masserie* are bed and breakfasts now. In the 1990s there was a trend to restore the crumbling *masserie* back to farmhouses and convert them into bed and breakfasts, boutique hotels, rentals, spas or restaurants to accommodate tourists. *Masseria* lodging range from rustic to luxurious. Most of the *masserie* have a swimming pool and garden. Some *masserie*

have a restaurant serving typical dishes of Puglia and a few have cooking classes for guests. Other luxury amenities can include full spa services, golfing, and beach clubs. Most are set in working farms that produce olive oil, wine, or produce. You can find most *masserie* in scenic, countryside settings.

Masserie in Ginosà

Ginosà is rich in *masserie* and the most important and popular are:

Masseria Strada (also known as Masseria San Vincenzo):

It is located in Contrada Fiumicello. It was built in the second half of the 19th century and is composed of two main buildings with barrel vaults and used as homes, storages and sheep pens.



Masseria Girifalco:

It is situated in Contrada Girifalco. It is composed of a stately home with a court and an olive-oil mill on the ground floor. It dominates the Bradano plain.



Tenuta Orsanese:

The Orsanese estate was used as a tobacco factory in the 1930s and is now a farmhouse and restaurant.



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ORTI'S FOUNTAIN

The natural territory of Ginosa is made up of various (several) types of soil: rock, sand and clay.

The "lame" that descend towards Ginosa Marina are areas destined for agriculture because they are fertile and productive. We have olive groves, vineyards, citrus groves and vegetables.



The natural area that stretches out in the historical area and that surrounds it as a horseshoe is hard and tufa rock.



The natural area that stretches in the area "Orti" and "Cignano" consists of clay soil. This clayey soil does not absorb rainwater, it actually slides it to the surface.

The Orti area is located in the upland compared to the country.

In the past, when there were no drains and the current urban services, the rainwater and the spring waters of the area were sloping and flowed into the area that called Orti's Fountain, or the current area of the Lombardo Radice School.



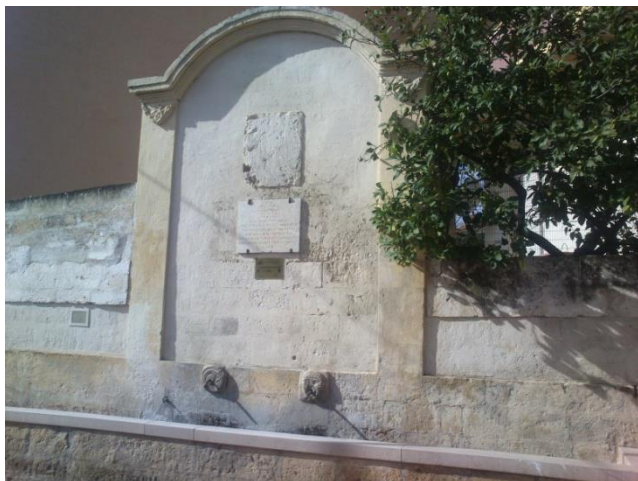
Lombardo Radice School.

It is thanks to this huge amount of water that the furnaces arose in this area, they were workshops where terracotta and clay objects were made.

Still today in this area there are streets named first furnace, second furnace.

There were also workshops of tinting for the colouring of fabrics. These activities required a lot of water.

The waters that flowed from the "Orti" to the Lombardo Radice area were collected in long terracotta canals. Around 1700, a fountain was built and it is still used today.



Orti's Fountain

In 1798 the mayor Miani built the fountain with two stone mouths for the flow of water and had a slab affixed in Latin.

These waters were used for the furnaces, for the dyers, then to water the animals, and for domestic uses, the women in fact went to wash the cloths.

Even today the water is fresh and clear and still many people go to fill cans and containers.

Now, there are no more original mouths and in their place there are two pipes from which the water comes out. The flow is no longer continuous, but is stopped manually.



Has salientes aquas aere publico e
puteo hortorum per cuniculos olim
deductas temporis lapsu deficientes
Aloysius Miani publica re iterum
curator feremnes fieri
diligentissime curavit.

The air, the waters, once they jump, dig underground, and these were brought to the public by flow from the well and once again, the curator of the people, the mayor Luigi Miani very carefully did build the fountain.

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MASSERIA STRADA (MASSERIA SAN VINCENZO)

History

On 7th October 1571, the feast of the *Madonna del Rosario*, in the river Lepanto the allied fleet of Christians defeated the Turkish army of the Sultan. In the following years, thanks to all the victorious commanders, a herd of military and professionals, most of them of Spanish origin, moved into our lands, and in 1590, Gianbattista Strada, known as “the notary”, arrived as well.

In 1765 another notary, Felice Modesto Strada, signed the act through which Ginosa officially chose the *Madonna del Rosario* as its patron. This is how the circle came to an end: from Lepanto to Spain, with the Madonna, Ginosa and the Strada family, the link could not be broken.

From Giuseppe Oronzo, a surgeon, to Vincenzo, a lawyer, to Diego, a prelate, to Felice, lieutenant colonel at the orders of cardinal Ruffo, to Ferdinando, Governor and Judge of the first criminal lawsuit for Prince Caracciolo for the land of Ginosa, to Dionigi, the mayor at the time of the bandit

“Coppolone”: for better or for worse, there’s always a member of the Strada family in the history of this town.

And here were are in *contrada Fiumicello*, where the Masseria Strada stands: a magic place where you can breathe the Great History.



Masseria Strada, Contrada Fiumicello, Ginosa

When in the eleventh century the Cavalieri Teutonici arrived in Ginosa, where they founded a hospital to welcome the pilgrims heading to the Holy Land, they were charmed by this *contrada* and decided to include it in their possessions (the Castelluccio). The Roman emperor Frederick II chose, together with other *contrade*, the valley of Fiumicello for the experimentation on the cultivation of cereals, breeding and hunting. Fiumicello is a crazy river where the streams from the

mountains of Altamura and Santeramo flow up until the Vallone of Silica, where it skirts the Sassi of Matera changing its name to “Gravina”, lapping the rocky settlements of Parco dei Monaci (Masseria Tortorelli) and the Pantone channel; once crossed Montescaglioso, it comes back to Apulia, it takes back its name, it greatly expands, passing under “Castelluccio” and finally, when it reaches the Archita Tower, it flows into the Bradano river. From the surroundings of “Castelluccio”, Ferdinando Strada had his Masseria, that was inherited by his four children. Right after that, one of the heirs, Rachele, when Vittorio Emanuele II King of Italy was reigning, donated her part of the Masseria to his brother Giuseppe, who gave it to his son Guglielmo. The latter greatly augmented the extension of it, acquiring first Masseria Andriulli, and then Masseria Calace, then Surico, whose kitchen is now the “breakfast room” in the farmhouse.

The *Masseria* today

Nowadays the Masseria is inhabited and owned by Guglielmo Strada. From the peak of the hill, the farmhouse complex dominates the whole view of the centuries-old olive trees and the young orange grove, inserted

between wheat fields, fresh vegetables between woods and grazing lands for the livestock kept in the wild for the breeding. The farmhouse has a certified biologic production of olive oil, fresh vegetables, oranges, prickly pears and fresh fruit. There are also four rooms named after ancient crafts: *il Massaro* (the sharecropper), *il Carovaniere* (the caravan leader), *il Pastore* (the shepherd), *lo Zappatore* (the digger):



Masseria Strada, one of the rooms

Masseria Strada also has a private chapel:



In 2001 the brothers Ada and Pierluigi Strada started to produce turfgrass sod using the alluvial soils of the Lago d'anice, a marshy area within the complex, reclaimed in the 1920s.



The machine used to produce turfgrass sod

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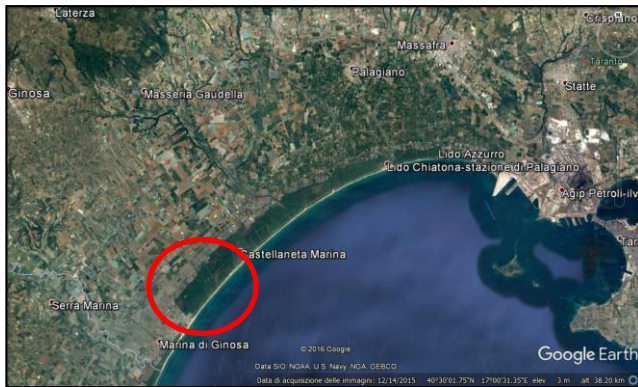
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REGINA PINE FOREST

The “Regina” pine forest is one of the pine groves of the Ionian coast and is part of a Protected Natural Area of about 3660 hectares. The Ionian coast includes a series of pine woods extending through the municipalities of Ginosa, Castellaneta, Palagiano, Massafra and Taranto.



The **plant biodiversity** is varied but the Aleppo pine is prevalent, with Mediterranean flora growing on sandy dunes.

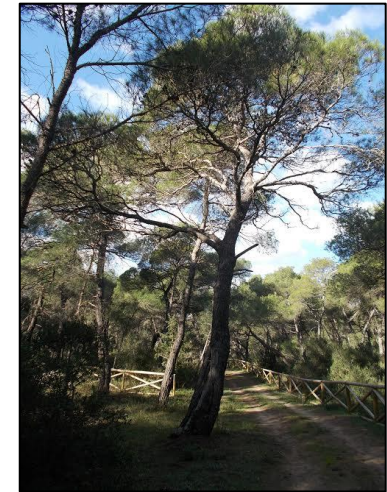


Regina Pine Forest

The plant biodiversity we could encounter includes: Aleppo pines and domestic pines, juniper (*ginepro*), myrtle (*mirto*), lentisk (*lentisco*), mock privet (*ilatro commune*), Italian buckthorn (*alaterno*), rosemary, butcher’s broom (*pungitopo*), acacia saligna and much more.



Juniper



Pines



Acacia saligna

The characteristic **fauna** that we could meet along the paths is manifold: wild boars, ground turtles, foxes, rural lizards, badgers, hedgehogs, vipers, snakes and four-lined snakes.



Wild boar



Badger (tasso)



Fox

The **avifauna** includes species such as owls, tawny owls and Eleonora's falcons.



Tawny owl (allocco)



Eleonora's falcon

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